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NEW STATESMAN

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There is no incomes policy

Clearly, Mrs Thatcher means what she has been saying. The isolation of Edward Heath confirms that a Tory Government would withdraw from involvement in individual pay bargains. Union members will be free to obtain 'excessive' settlements, but the result will be to price someone out of work. The unions, it is supposed, will therefore change their ways.

The principle resembles aversion-therapy delivered by electric shock, but the practise is cruder, because no mechanism provides that the shock will be delivered to the relevant individual. The man made jobless is not particularly likely to be the original 'greedy' claimant: the identity of the sufferer will depend on the employer's ability to pass on his extra costs elsewhere. If such a policy reduces inflation, it does so merely by reducing economic activity generally.

Given such an alternative, the Labour movement needs to be talking in wider terms than adjustment of the percentages of a pay norm. The Labour Party and the TUC, in their document *Into the Eighties* entirely fudged the question of the relevance of free collective bargaining in socialist policy. It should first have been said that bargaining by modern and powerful unions does not necessarily lead to the self-defeating spiral of 1974-5: and at the same time it should have been admitted that the real defect of the system is its inability to distribute income fairly. All the evidence shows that free collective bargaining does far more for the white-collar workers of ASTMS than for the low-paid of NUPE. And the Equal Pay Act, a form of statutory incomes policy, has done far more than a century of collective bargaining to improve the wages of low-paid women.

Yet the Left in Britain has always rejected income policies: essentially, because they have been little more than wage-freezes, cobbled together at midnight to placate foreign creditors and stem accelerating inflation. In 1948-50, in 1964-66, and in 1974-76 the unions overrode Left-wing objections, and supported incomes policy – only to find support ebbing away as the promises of economic reform and expansion turned into the realities of deflation and one-sided sacrifice.

By means of sanctions, resignation threats, references to a Royal Commission on income distribution, and by even more ruthless withdrawals from the bank of union goodwill, this government has carried on the wage freeze a little longer than any of its predecessors. By Stage Four, then, it should have found time to develop wage-control into a coherent policy: dealing not only with wages, but also profits, dividends, salaries, fringe benefits, the social wage and the income of the self-employed. Instead, we have a low norm calculated to solidify inequality, an appallingly low minimum-wage target, and a collection of special cases born of ad-hoc political pressures – firemen, doctors, police, 'top people', dentists and university teachers. Alongside this we have relaxed dividend controls, a less progressive tax structure, and an abandonment of the Price Commission's original purpose. This was the 'incomes policy' demolished at Blackpool.

The central judgment the unions must make of any incomes policy is whether its objective is to prop up what already exists, or whether it is part of a proposal for substantial reform. Too obviously, Mr Callaghan has nothing larger in mind than keeping the economy ticking over, with a million and a half unemployed, for another year or so. In these circumstances, it would be quite wrong for the unions to trade-in their bargaining rights for the gimmick of a re-styled Price Commission. They must make it plain that sacrifice has no value if it merely bails out a failed capitalism, and that further restraint is pointless if it is not integrated into a programme of socialist reform. One thing that the country does not need is another futile gesture in support of the status quo.

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Notes on Politics and Power

Looking for a way out in Namibia

Christopher Hitchens writes from Pretoria: Dirk Mudge and his 'Democratic Turnhalle Alliance' resemble Ian Smith and his Rhodesian Front in more than one way – just as Windhoek in the Jacaranda season is mildly reminiscent of the neatness of white Salisbury. Mudge has this week more or less declared UDI only with much more open and obvious South African support. Like Smith, Mudge is fairly sure of the majority of the white electorate. Like Smith, he is absolutely sure of the hostility of the majority of his black electorate, which is why he wants a staged election as soon as he can get it. Like Smith, he has an entourage of black 'colleagues' who flank him at meetings and do not speak unless he asks them to (and not always then). Like Smith, Mudge has an uncharming politeness with questioners, and he couples this with a haughty sort of candour.

David Owen and German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher in Pretoria.

When I asked him if his party was supported by South African interests, he freely admitted that it was, and claimed to see nothing incongruous about getting help from the very source from which he claims to want 'independence.'

But the final reminder which all this provides is the most unhappy one. Mudge obviously knows that, given a certain amount of sympathy from South Africa, he can defy the West and get away with it. The South Africans themselves are openly contemptuous of the sanctions talk. They do not believe that the West has the balls for it, and still less do they believe in the resolve of the United Nations. The 'elections' on 1 December are a horny two fingers waved in the face of what is jocosely known as world opinion. And it is unedifying to see the Western foreign ministers as they strive to get a formula which will downplay the significance of the event. The line really, is 'I beseech you in the bowels of Christ, think it possible you may be mistaken'. But Cromwell was not just making a suggestion.

Nobody in Namibia itself underestimates the significance of the December exercise. SWAPO, of course, are already convinced of the cynicism of the West. Mr Tlhabenello, their information officer in Windhoek itself, told me that they regard the European countries as too entangled economically with South Africa to be able to mount any decisive policy. But further over to the Right, the Namibian National Front (which opposes SWAPO) has called the elections a 'neocolonial, reactionary and illegal process' and urged voters to boycott them. (Appeals of that kind may not be legal much longer.) The seven leading churches in this churchstrewn territory have also denounced 'the manner in which the people of the country have been forced to register as voters, causing widespread fear and apprehension about the elections planned by South Africa'. They also criticise the 'lack of information' given to the people about the alternative United Nations and SWAPO plan'. Well may they do so – because with the help of German slush funds the Mudge faction have taken the precaution of buying all the newspapers in Windhoek and bringing economic pressure on the one independent Journal which has been opened since.

The South Africans are anxious to preserve the fiction of the DTA as an independent force, so if they were going to announce any major concession they would certainly not have let Mudge go out on such a limb by himself. Nor would they allow General Jannie Geldenhume, who commands the South African Forces in Namibia, to make statements about his ability to defend the whole Namibian border indefinitely. New installations are in the process of being built, which does not argue any anxiety by Pretoria to see its own troops being replaced by Canadians and Finns.

Meanwhile, the tame South African broadcasting system is preparing the population for a rejection of the core of the Waldheim plan. So the chances of the two Bothas publicly reneging not only on their own record, but on their carefully built up Namibian client, must be counted as extremely slim.

Diplomatic crunches can always be postponed or softened, but political ones cannot. If the Western Five do succeed in grafting together a face-saving formula which also saves South Africa's face, then they will forefeit the remaining trust reposed in them by SWAPO, and it will not be as easy to get all-party agreement next time. Meanwhile, on the ground itself, the Mudge election will widen and deepen the conflict between the African majority and the existing authorities. So there is no obvious way in which the West, with its heavy investment in the apartheid system, can pose as a bridge-builder between the dispossessed and their enemies.

In a happier period, before Vorster's retiring speech and the vandalising of the agreements made this far, Mr Harold Evans of the *Sunday Times* wrote that 'the DTA is seen as a multiracial if tribal answer to SWAPO extremism'. As the story unfolds, the DTA is led by a party which is firmly white supremacist (the Republicans), and it has resisted pleas from its tribal Herero supporters that it become a political party instead of an ethnic coalition. Its offices are in the same buildings as De Beers and Consolidated Diamond Mines. A good aid to memory here is to render the DTA's name translated in full. 'Democratic Drill-Hall Alliance' gives a much better flavour of the nature of the beast. It seems vain to hope that the parents of this creature can be soft-talked into strangling it at birth.

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Mr Smith blows his American strategy

Godfrey Hodgson writes from Washington: Ian Smith has proved his point to a certain extent. A large majority of Americans appear to agree that he deserves a hearing. He has talked to the National Press Club at lunch, and to the foreign policy establishment at breakfast. He has been heard by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which is now dominated by such Liberal figures as Senator Frank Church and Senator Dick Clarke, the leading Africanist in Congress; and by numerous conservative audiences. He has been photographed talking to Henry Kissinger and he has been abundantly – and often favourably – reported.

'If the word "fascism" has any meaning' wrote William Safire, the *New York Times*' house conservative, 'The Andrew Young/Jimmy Carter policy towards Rhodesia can only be described as racist in its clear intent to . . . impose a rule by two black terrorist leaders determined to drive out the remaining whites.' In the journal *Policy Review*, Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan criticised the State Department for using the words 'liberation forces' to describe 'guerrillas armed by the Soviet Union and China and which certainly espouse a totalitarian state'. Henry Kissinger (now a known contender for the other New York Senate seat if Jacob Javits retires in 1980) has given Smith a limited endorsement: 'I'm saying we should give his approach an opportunity'.

However, the US press has given almost equal coverage to Allan Savory, the former Rhodesian army officer who is now the head of the National Unifying Force in opposition to Smith who has followed him to the States as a kind of 'truth squad'. Savory points out that Smith has not for one moment allowed his opposition in Rhodesia the free speech he claims here.

In the political arena, Smith has failed. He has been unable to persuade his conservative friends to take the Rhodesian case out of the hands of the Africanists and make it a political issue of Marxists versus the West. He has said he would be prepared to attend an all-party conference with Nkomo and Mugabe provided there are no preconditions, and Sithole and Muzorewa seem to endorse this position. The Americans – and the Brits here in Washington – have said there will be no preconditions, merely preparations. But officials here are perfectly aware that nothing in Smith's record suggests that he would genuinely negotiate with the guerrilla leaders. And nothing, of course, suggests that even if there were an agreement, Smith would keep his word.

The best informed observers in Washington believe it's a race between the Anglo-American diplomacy that is trying to corral Smith to the conference table and the arbitrament of war. As the *Washington Post* commented: 'One of the mysteries of Smith's appeal here is how he supposes that tacit United States – United Kingdom support for his regime, even including the lifting of international sanctions against Rhodesia, could prevent the virtually foregone guerrilla victory'.

A successor to John Mackintosh

Brian Wilson writes: The constituency of Berwick and East Lothian is most improbable Labour territory. In area, it is composed mainly

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of large farms and estates. Fewer than 20 per cent of the work force is engaged in manufacturing industry. Sturdy towns like Haddington, Longnidary and North Berwick cry out for a Tory MP to grace the church sale of work and rotary wine and cheese. The seat was, however, held for Labour at the last election by the late Professor John P. Mackintosh with a majority of 2,740. He was an exceptionally active constituency member, held in high esteem by voters of all parties. This was a paradox – many of his parliamentary colleagues found him arrogant and contemptuous of lower intellects, but in his own area he was noted for his approachability and knowledge of electors' christian names. Gerald O'Brien, Labour's agent in the constituency, dismisses the 'personal vote' as a major factor in determining the outcome on the 26th October by-election. 'It was a personal vote only in the sense that he personally educated a lot of people into voting Labour. But it wasn't for himself'.

The Labour candidate, John Home Robertson, is a fairly typical Mackintosh convert to the Labour cause. He sits on Berwickshire District Council as an independent, farms 800 acres which represent the thin end of the family fortune, ardently believes in devolution and shudders at the mention of conference resolutions calling for land nationalisation. But in spite of Professor Mackintosh's attributes and a solid core of Labour voters, the seat would never have been won without a local organisation that is quite exceptional by Labour standards. It is the only constituency in Scotland with a full-time organiser to itself. There are more than 2,000 paid-up members and a couple of flourishing social clubs. A poll of over 90 per cent is common in some solid Labour areas – unheard of in just about any other constituency. For once, Labour matches the Tories in the postal vote stakes. With the result that there are almost 3,000 postal votes involved in the contest – more than double what would normally be expected in a constituency this size.

For the Conservatives failure to capture their number one target in Scotland in the auspicious circumstances of a by-election would be a major disaster. They are represented by Miss Margaret Mitchell a slightly tweedy lady, who is faced with the difficult task of depicting Mr Home Robertson as some kind of red menace. On Monday, she declared – in the face of local evidence – that 'moderation has fled the Labour Party. It is so savage now that, if it were a dog, it would be shot.'

Toolmakers: the militant individualists

Brian Spittles writes: The prospect of a strike by British Leyland toolroom workers refuses to go away. The men are members of the AUEW demanding separate negotiating rights within the company because they feel it is the only way they can restore the differentials in pay and conditions that have been eroded over the past decade or so.

A recent survey I have conducted of a random sample of Cowley toolmakers shows that they do not consider themselves superior to other workers, just different. Contrary to some popular mythology, they are not in general a closely-knit social group. Their corporate identity exists mainly within the workplace. Outside their occupation, they are individualists.

Only 16 per cent of the toolmakers make use of the well patronised social centre – the Romanway – at Cowley and most of those who do are interested in the sporting rather than the social activities.

An interesting discovery has been that many toolmakers have hobbies, often involving other craft skills.

Few toolmakers are involved in a family occupation: only 12 per cent of the sample I interviewed had fathers who were toolmakers, though over two thirds had fathers who were some sort of skilled worker and over three-quarters of toolmaker's sons were in skilled trades.

Housing is another area in which they show their individualism. A lot of Oxford's Leyland workers live close to their work, often on council estates, but the toolmakers are much more widely dispersed. Only 14 per cent live in the areas popular with other Leyland workers, and the vast majority of married toolmakers are owner occupiers. Of those who declared a political allegiance 55 per cent said they voted Conservative. The toolmakers even provide a Tory councillor.

Despite this political allegiance, support for their leader Roy Fraser – who is usually dubbed a leftist – is unanimous. There is no evidence of the toolmen being anti-trade union, even though their dispute is with their own union.

The toolmakers are clearly cast in the mould of nineteenth century artisans who were conservatives in wanting to protect their position and status but were radicals in their sense of individualism. However, perhaps surprisingly in the volatile environment of Cowley, there is virtually no evidence of hostility towards the toolmakers. This suggests that other workers too are seeing them as a special group with a special case.

Personal Brief:

The mind of the new Pope

The nation's bookmakers must be kicking themselves over their refusal to take bets on this week's papal election: Fleet Street's spectacularly inaccurate predictions would have ensured a killing. Cardinal Hume's campaign is usually run by his old Ampleforth pupils in Times Newspapers, but this time it was the *Guardian* which decided to promote his claim to the job (and which accepted his defeat with thoroughly bad grace on Tuesday morning) while the *Sunday Times*, relying on a tip from its mysterious Vatican source *Sotto Voce*, went for Bennelli.

Cardinal Wojtyla's election to the papacy had, in fact, been expected in European intellectual circles for about three years, for the very good reason that it was in such circles that he was best-known. While John Paul I's spurious claim to brains was based on his embarrassing 'letters' to such leaders of world thought as Pinnochio, his successor is, in the words of a Polish journalist, who has talked at length with him, 'a full-blooded intellectual, with formidable analytical abilities, who likes to have other intellectuals around him.'

Intellectual consistency, at least, should ensure that he doesn't indulge in any fire-and-brimstone threats to excommunicate Catholics who vote Communist. This is not because he is 'soft' on communism – although he recognises certain praiseworthy elements in the Marxist ideology of social transformation – but because his experience of communism at first hand, as Archbishop of Krakow, has taught him to shape his policy towards communism on a basis of what will achieve the most positive results. Those who thought that he was too intellectual to make a forceful leader for the proletarian Polish Catholics have been confounded. His realism has won important concessions from the government – on the building of churches and the religious education of children – in return for promises from Catholic leaders that they will attempt to stop their people killing policemen. But he hasn't sold his congregation down the river: he was one of the leading supporters of the strikes in 1976; he was friendly with the Student Solidarity Committee in Krakow and took a personal interest in the case of Stanislaw Pyjas, a student who died in suspicious circumstances last year. He has encouraged the 'flying university' of historians and scientists who teach aspects of their subjects which are omitted from the official curriculum.

He has also been honest about the failings of his own people. On hearing of his election, the World Council of Churches – in what one hopes was merely spur-of-the-moment thoughtlessness – said that Wojtyla would bring 'the rich tradition and spirituality of the Polish people' to his new office. Some of these rich traditions – such as a long history of anti-semitism – are actually rather nasty; but Wojtyla has himself condemned the unsavoury skeletons in Poland's cupboard. His denunciation of anti-semitism was markedly stronger than the Polish church's official position.

His commitment to reform was first witnessed during the second Vatican Council, and although he is certainly not revolutionary, one can hope for a loosening of the reins on social questions. In the past 20 years the abortion rate in Poland has risen enormously (as much as 50 per cent, according to one doctor) and divorce and contraception have also proved popular, yet the many Catholics who practise these 'social evils' have not received ecclesiastical retribution. Although it is unlikely that Wojtyla will introduce any radical changes in church policy on social questions during the early days of his papacy, he may be more inclined to turn a blind eye than some of his predecessors.

NS writers have not been particularly charitable towards the failings of John Paul II's two immediate predecessors, but the new pontiff cannot be written off as a blinkered reactionary or a simple-minded clown. He may turn out to be unable to withstand the weight of the Vatican bureaucracy or the conservatism of the Curia, but his past record of dealing with tough bureaucratic customers, and his undoubted intellectual honesty suggest that he stands a better chance than most. Is it possible that the Catholic Church has produced a man conscious of the past, but capable of being realistic about the present?

Francis Wheen

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Francis Wheen on London's besieged Asians

Where self-defence is an offence

A day in the life of an Asian in Newham begins with the morning post and newspapers. You scan the paper, noting that Mrs Thatcher has reaffirmed her belief in family unity while simultaneously declaring that she wants to stop children and aged parents of Asians in Britain from joining their relatives over here. Your letters include scrawled messages of 'Wogs out' and 'Pakis go home'.

A cheery start. You then drive your children to school. Most Newham Asians now travel by car: 'Not that we can afford it,' says one, 'but if you queue for public transport people stare at you. And you're always in danger of being attacked, even in broad daylight.' When the children reach school, they are still under siege. A gang of white youths in Newham has recently taken to sitting on the roofs of buildings near schools and shooting with air rifles at Asian children in the playgrounds. It is *If . . .* come true, but in a rather less glamorous setting. And woe betide any child who leaves the school grounds. Last April a 9 year-old Asian boy, whose mother had died the previous week, went home from school to have lunch with his grandmother. Outside his front gate he was stopped by five white boys armed with a knife, and was pinioned to the wall. 'Stab him now,' said one. 'No, let's just take his eyes out,' replied another. In fact they cut open his face from his left eye across to his left ear.

In that case, as with so many racial attacks, the police did not exactly bust a gut to find the culprits. Three weeks after the incident the boy's sister was approached at a bus stop by a youth who asked: 'Is your brother dead yet?' A few minutes later she overheard him admitting to his companion that he had participated in the attack. The girl went to the CID, only to be told by a detective: 'Oh, I know him. He wouldn't do a thing like that.' Collapse of injured party.

After leaving the children at school, you go to work. Enduring racial taunts isn't written into the conditions of employment, but you must do it all the same. And once you leave your shop, office or factory you are again a target for physical as well as verbal assaults. Nor is there any safety in numbers: a group of 20 Asians coming out of a factory recently was attacked by an even larger group of whites.

Meanwhile your children are discovering that racial ignorance plays an important part in their school curriculum. Mr H. S. Dhesi, a local teacher, tells of how he recently had to take a colleague's English class. The set book they were using was called, with unintentional accuracy, *Tall Story*, which included the tale of an English boy called Samuel who went to India and had tea with a Hindoo [sic]. The 'Hindoo' called one of his wives and ordered her to clear up some tea which Samuel had spilt. 'You wouldn't find stories about going to Birmingham for tea with a Christian and his wives,' says Mr Dhesi, 'but as we're a minority it's apparently O.K. to write nonsense about us.'

Once you reach home after work you will, if you have any sense, stay there. Few Asians now dare to go out after sunset: so many of them have been attacked outside pubs, or on their way to parties, that they would rather have no social life than no life at all. A senior police officer in Newham admitted last week that parts of Forest Gate and West Ham are now 'no-go' areas after dark. But attacks in daylight are becoming increasingly common too. 'Here am I, a man of 45,' says one Asian. 'If I am walking down the road – even during the day – and I see a group of white youths standing on the corner, I tremble. Shall I cross the road? Or will that provoke them? How will I deal with a sarcastic remark? What if they attack me? Because of the atmosphere round here we now see any group of white youths as a threat.' Not without reason. A month ago, for example, a Pakistani boy who was attacked outside Barking railway station ran into the station, pursued by his assailants, and on to the platform, where there happened to be a policeman. Undeterred, the attackers proceeded to set about the policeman as well. The thugs were eventually fined the princely sum of £75.

You cannot expect such leniency from the courts if you are an Asian. On 23 April last year three brothers, Balvinder, Mohinder and Sukhvinder Singh Virk were repairing their car, just in front of their house. The National Front had held a St George's Day march in Haringey that day, and racial tension was in the air. A gang of five white youths approached the Virks and, the brothers allege, shouted racial abuse. When the Virks remained unprovoked, one of the youths told Sukhvinder, who was 17, to sit down on the pavement. As he made no move to obey, the youth repeated: 'I command you to sit down.' Apparently unaware that the days of the Raj are over, and inflamed by Sukhvinder's continued disobedience, the youth allegedly attacked him with a spanner he had picked up from the ground.

Seeing the attack, a fourth brother, Joginder, came out of the house, brandishing a knife to frighten the white youths. In an ensuing scuffle two of the whites were injured. Meanwhile Sukhvinder had gone to telephone the police. He would have been better advised not to bother, for the police's first action on arriving at the scene was to arrest the four Virk brothers, charging them with common assault and occasioning actual bodily harm.

The case eventually came to the Old Bailey in July this year and was presided over by Judge Michael Argyle of *Oz* trial fame. Three of the white youths appeared as prosecution witnesses – *they* had not been charged with any offence relating to the incident. When the defence counsel attempted to establish the racial nature of the attack by questioning the youths on whether they had attended the NF march, he was ruled out of order by the judge. The all-white jury found the brothers guilty and Judge Argyle (whose recreation, appropriately enough, is boxing) pronounced sentence: three months in a detention centre for Sukhvinder, two years imprisonment for Balvinder, three years for Mohinder, and a staggering seven years for Joginder. 'Justice in this country is even-handed,' said the judge. In this context it is worth remembering that the killers of Gurdip Singh Chaggar – whose death in Southall in 1976 caused Kingsley Read's memorable epitaph of 'one down, one million to go' – were sentenced to four years imprisonment.

Mr A. Sivanandan, Director of the Institute of Race Relations, was horrified by the sentences: 'We question the impartiality of a judiciary which in case after case finds against the victims of racism in our society rather than the perpetrators. In this case the judge even ruled that the introduction of racialism by the defence was "irrelevant" to the case.' An Indian who is a close friend of the Virks said that the sentences had left the Asian community in an impossible position: 'If I am attacked in the street I have the choice of either allowing them to beat me up, so that I end up in hospital, or of defending myself, in which case I shall be metaphorically beaten up by the courts and sent to prison. Of the two, I think I prefer to go to hospital. But why should I have to make such a choice at all?'

'This is the British justice we're supposed to admire so much,' says another local Asian. The Asian community has come to mistrust the police as well as the courts, and it is not difficult to see why. In Barking, for example, a leading Sikh who was attacked in a pub lavatory managed to grab one of his attacker's companions while the others fled. When he took the boy to the police station, however, the police were not so concerned with interviewing the boy to discover the identity of the assailants as with criticising the Sikh for apprehending a mere accomplice rather than the real villains.

Racial prejudice and ignorance is institutionalised. Few council officers have any multi-racial training, and thus cannot understand the distinctive ethnic and religious groups which make up the Asian community. Most of the Community Liaison Inspectors – all white, naturally – are considered qualified for the job on the strength of having spent a fortnight in India. 'Some of them don't even know what Sikhs are,' says one Asian sadly. Their understanding of racial matters is, *mutatis mutandis*, not much greater than that of the average National Front supporter, for whom 'Paki'

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is a generalised term of abuse applicable to anyone from the Indian sub-continent.

The Community Relations Councils, because of their dependence on local council grants, are largely ineffectual. In 1976, in co-operation with Asians, the local CRC organised a peaceful anti-racialism march from Ilford to Barking, led by the late Millie Miller MP. The CRC also produced a report claiming that local schools were not meeting the needs of West Indian children. Because of these two activities Redbridge Council promptly stopped the CRC's £4,000 grant, accusing it of going beyond its limits. 'The local council wants the CRC to be an institution to suppress our true feelings,' says Bahadur Gahir, of Newham Asian Federation, 'something which will sweep us and our problems under the carpet.' The CRC's unwillingness to become involved in anything remotely controversial is well illustrated by the fact that, when the Steering Committee of Asian Organisations Against Racialism wrote to all the local CRCs about the case of the Virk brothers, only Hackney CRC even bothered to acknowledge the letter.

In the face of such apathy from those who are meant to support the Asians, and hostility from those who are supposed to ensure that they receive the protection of the law, is it any wonder that many Asians have decided that their best chance of survival lies in defending themselves, rather than relying on others? 'Self-defence is no offence' is a chant frequently heard on anti-racialist demonstrations these days, and this is why the Asian community is so concerned about the case of the Virk brothers. The Steering Committee of Asian Organisations Against Racialism has called a public meeting in Ilford this weekend to discuss the Virk case and, more generally, to decide what steps Asians should take to defend themselves against the growing menace of racialist assaults without ending up behind bars for seven years. The youngest Virk brother, Sukhvinder, was recently released on appeal after serving five and a half weeks of his three month sentence, but no date has yet been set for the appeals of the other three brothers. Local Asians sent a petition with 10,000 signatures to the Home Secretary, but to no avail.

Until recently, anti-racialist campaigns tended to attract public cynicism because most of the participants were white Trotskyists. Since the attacks on shopkeepers in Brick Lane earlier this year all that has changed, and black people – from radical West Indian activists to conservative Asian businessmen – are beginning to organise themselves. 'Defence Committees' have sprung up in East London. Last week saw the formation of a group called Black People Against State Harassment (with the picturesque acronym BASH) which is taking up the issue of police harassment of the black community, including the notoriously unrestricted use of 'sus' (the offence of being a suspected person under the 1824 Vagrancy Act).

The police may not like the new militancy among black people – 'This lot are bigger fascists than the National Front,' remarked one police officer recently, pointing at supporters of the Hackney and Tower Hamlets Defence Committee in Brick Lane – but they should not be surprised, since they are partly to blame for the mood of frustration and insecurity which has caused it. They have done little to prevent gangs of white youths roaming the streets in search of blood, while dealing harshly with any black people who attempt to defend themselves. If you are an Asian in Newham you spend each day in a state of siege. You return from work and spend the evening sitting in your house, with the front door firmly locked. And so to bed – but even in the land of nod there is no escape from the relentless psychological warfare. In the early hours of the morning the telephone rings, and over the wire comes the unmistakeable voice of white supremacy: 'You fucking Paki swine. We're going to get you. Sleep well.'

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Christopher Hird on charity and tax avoidance

Disablement turned to account

Left to right: Lord Goodman, David Ennals, Alf Morris – and the Motability symbol.

The Government, the Opposition, the clearing banks and a string of businessmen, property developers, trades unionists and financiers are very pleased with themselves. The source of their pleasure is Motability – a scheme to give the disabled the exclusive use of a car for a very modest sum. However, despite the scheme's attractions to the disabled its main attraction to the banks seems to be as a £100 million tax avoidance scheme. For some disabled people the scheme is prohibitively expensive, and it seems to have been introduced despite the existence of a more attractive alternative.

Social Services minister David Ennals first announced Motability last December. A few months before he and the minister for the disabled, Alf Morris, had asked Lord Goodman to bring together a group of people with an interest in the disabled to see if a way could be found to make sure that the disabled made the best use of their mobility allowance – this is now £10 a week and is paid to about 100,000 disabled people.

The result of these talks was Motability – a registered charity, run by Lord Goodman and Mr Jeffrey Sterling, the boss of Town and City Properties. Among the aims which Mr Ennals listed was:

> to enable disabled people to have the personal use of a car by means of a leasing scheme. Detailed discussions about such a scheme are well advanced.
>
> It is expected that the clearing banks will make substantial loan funds available, and that the scheme will get under way by next summer.

The scheme – which was greeted in even more fulsome terms by the Opposition spokesman on the subject Mr Patrick Jenkin – is now under way. The banks are putting up £100 million and it is expected that 40,000 people will eventually get cars. In return for signing across his or her £10 a week mobility allowance for three or four years the disabled person gets the use of a fully maintained and serviced car. In addition to the weekly payment the disabled person must pay a lump sum at the beginning of the period varying from £139 to £694 depending on which car they use. No prepayment is required for a Mini. At the end of the period the car goes back to Motability. The disabled person has unrestricted use of the car, but if he or she travels more than 10,000 miles a year, there is an excess mileage charge to pay. This is 3p a mile for 10,001 to 15,000 miles; 5p a mile for 15,001 to 20,000 miles and 10p a mile above 20,000. For those disabled people who do a lot of travelling – because, for instance, their job demands it – this extra charge can soon reach gigantic proportions and is much higher than that charged by commercial car leasing companies.

The disabled person signs a leasing agreement with Motability Finance Ltd. – a company owned by eight clearing banks, but with 87 per cent of the shares in the hands of Barclays, Midland, National Westminster and Lloyds. Leasing has undergone spectacular growth in the last few years, mainly as a result of anomalies in the British system of company taxation.

A leasing agreement is a form of rental. The user of the asset which can be machinery, a lorry, a railway truck, a car, a carpet, or even a suit – pays a rental to the lessor for a specified period of time at the end of which, depending on the agreement, the assets either revert to the lessor or can be acquired by the lessee.

Under Inland Revenue rules, British companies can, through the use of capital allowances, off-set the total cost of any capital investment they make against profits in the year in which the investment is made.

In addition, under the stock relief rules, they can offset most of the increase in their stock levels against their tax bill. As a result of both these measures many British companies pay virtually no corporation tax. When a company is paying no tax and cannot, therefore, take advantage of the capital allowances on any further investment the argument in favour of leasing instead of buying outright is much stronger.

In a similar way, the system has been a powerful incentive for the banks to get into business as lessors. Banks do not carry stock and make only small investment in fixed assets, so they have big tax bills. However, a lessor who purchases an asset for leasing, gets the full advantages of the capital allowances. Building up their leasing subsidiaries has helped the banks reduce their tax bills quite substantially in recent years. In 1977 alone the big four banks saved something over £100 million of tax.

The Motability scheme is a particularly complex leasing arrangement. Four motor companies – British Leyland, Vauxhall, Chrysler and Ford – have agreed to supply cars to Motability Leasing – a partnership of the banks – which then leases the cars to Motability Finance Ltd, which on-leases them to the disabled. This is the most efficient way of ensuring that the £100 million of capital allowances on the cars are handed to the participating banks. At the end of the leasing period the cars will be sold back to the manufacturers or their dealers.

Precise comparisons with other leasing contracts are difficult because until now private individuals have not been able to lease cars. But a company leasing an Escort or a Chevette – both of which are available through Motability – would have to pay about twice the rental charged to a disabled person under the Motability scheme. However, there are several reasons why Motability should be able to operate on a lower margin.

First, their buying power – customers with £100 million to spend do not come along every day – has made it possible to do an attractive deal on the purchase of the cars and the servicing contracts.

Second, the scheme is cheap to run. Virtually all the administrative work is borne by the Department of Health and Social Security and by Motability, the charity, which receives a grant from the government. Motability Finance Ltd, receives its money direct in lump sums from the DHSS. Thirdly, there are some unusual features to the Motability leasing contract. These are the pre-payment, index-linked rental payments, and the extra high mileage charge.

The pre-payment – which is virtually unknown in normal leasing – is in addition to the monthly rental and is an attempt to make up for the fact that the rental payments are so low. In practice – in the case of the Chevette 4 door saloon, for instance – it means that in the first year Motability Finance receive total payments slightly greater than they would receive under a normal leasing agreement. The second unusual feature is the index-linking. Under the terms of the leasing agreement, the disabled person is required to sign across his or her mobility allowance for the whole of the leasing term.

At the moment the allowance is £10, but from November 1979 it will be increased in line with the rate of inflation. Under the terms of the leasing agreement, all such increases go to Motability Finance Ltd. The mileage charges are very much higher than those imposed under normal leasing agreements. Godfrey Davis, for instance charge 2½p a mile for every mile over 10,000 on a Ford Escort lease. An excess mileage charge is justified because clearly the greater the use given to a car, the less its value at the end of the lease period. Motability Finance Ltd say their rates are meant to be penal. A lot of – possibly most – disabled people live in homes with other car users and Motability Finance Ltd are anxious to discourage these people from using a cheap leased car for their business or any other

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use not connected with the disabled person.

The average disabled person is reckoned to travel something like 8,000 miles a year, about a fifth less than the average family. However, the disabled are a group in which the idea of an average is particularly unhelpful. A disabled person doing a normal job can very easily travel much more than the average and soon clock up a massive excess mileage charge.

When the government first announced the Motability scheme last December, it said detailed discussions were well advanced, but the details given to representatives of the disabled at a briefing on the same day dealt only with the scheme in its broadest outline. It was not until this April that Lord Goodman's working party decided that a hire purchase scheme would never get off the ground and the future lay in a leasing scheme. By that time Margaret Thatcher and Patrick Jenkin had joined the Prime Minister, David Ennals and Alf Morris as Patrons and a galaxy of businessmen had been signed up as governors.

In June when the Motability scheme was unveiled the briefing notes prepared for the occasion made no mention of the excess mileage charge. Clearly, disabled drivers using their cars a lot will probably do better buying on hire purchase. At the moment, Motability do not offer such a scheme. But amazingly, the Government had the blueprint of a scheme which did not include an excess mileage charge already on its hands when it approached Lord Goodman last year.

In June 1977 the finance company United Dominions Trust, together with British Leyland, devised a leasing scheme. It had snags, principally UDT's unwillingness to fund the scheme. However, after lengthy negotiations with the Government and other interested parties, UDT producd a proposal in which they were ready to put up the money. There would be no deposit, no excess mileage charge, and rental would be fixed at the level of mobility allowance ruling at the start of the lease period. Each car would be covered by UDT's standard four-year warranty against mechanical breakdown. UDT also proposed a Mobility Club which would offer, among other things, a special insurance deal.

The plan – approved by various disablement pressure groups, and checked by a firm of management consultants – was with the Government in August when news that something was afoot leaked to the press. This provided Patrick Jenkin with an opportunity to commit the Tories to introducing the scheme if the Government refused – which it showed no sign of doing. Soon after, the Government brought in Lord Goodman, and DHSS interest in the UDT scheme evaporated. A victim, perhaps, of party in-fighting?

What does it matter? The Motability scheme is good for the disabled (or some of them) good for the banks, and good for the motor makers and dealers. Who loses? The Government loses, of course, because the banks pocket £100 million of tax relief. The economy loses, because leasing capacity is supposed to be used for industrial investment, not consumer spending. And the disabled lose, because they could have been provided with a better deal.

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Ian Black, from Israel, on the realities of Camp David

Some progress: some deadly ambiguities

ON THE FACE of it, everything's going rather well. President Sadat has renamed his War Ministry the Ministry of Defence; Mr Begin has offered to encourage American Jews to invest in the failing Egyptian economy and Israeli settlers are preparing to abandon their homes in Northern Sinai. This week, the two sides are meeting in Washington to thrash out the details of the peace treaty they hope to sign by Christmas.

Consider the tensions of the year that is coming to an end – since the Egyptian leader stepped on to the tarmac at Ben-Gurion Airport and broke the ice, 30 years thick. Remember how many times his peace initiative has been pronounced dead or dying by the pundits and commentators. Think of the crises and bloodletting that have made this year indistinguishable from its predecessors, and you have to admit – even the pessimists and Cassandras among you – that change is in the air.

For the Middle East, the Camp David accords are second only in historical importance to Sadat's Jerusalem visit, which made them possible. But now that the parties involved have had some time to digest their significance, project their implications, observe their shortcomings and appreciate their advantages, the 'framework agreements' signed by Sadat and Begin look far less dazzling in the cold grey dawn than they did under the glare of the spotlights in the White House.

The future of Sinai is the one problem that has been settled to the satisfaction of both protagonists. If there is no unexpected foul-up in the course of the current Egyptian-Israeli negotiations – and Begin's absence may be useful in avoiding that – then there will first be a peace treaty.

By the end of the three years allotted for the completion of the process we may expect to see the restoration of Egyptian sovereignty over the sand and oil of the peninsula; the evacuation of some 20 Israeli settlements and two strategic air bases and the establishment of full diplomatic and commercial ties between the two countries. Tourism, which both sides await eagerly, will seal the bargain.

For those who have not shared the Israelis' paranoia – that they may be falling victim to an Arab plot of monstrous dimensions to return them gradually to the constricted and exposed pre-1967 cease-fire lines – it is difficult to understand the contentiousness of such an apparently simple solution to the Sinai issue. If the winds had been blowing a little cooler it could surely have been arrived at several years ago. For the Camp David agreement on Sinai is nothing more outrageous than the logical conclusion of the disengagement agreements of 1974 and 1975, what Israelis believed were Sadat's contribution to Arab 'salami tactics' and that forever associated Henry Kissinger with the concept of jet-lag.

Although useful as a staging area and training ground, the wastes of Sinai are no longer indispensable to Israel's security – if indeed they ever were. The much-vaunted concept of 'strategic depth' has had much of the wind taken out of it in the last few years by the sophisticated military technology that has been generously streamed to both sides. There is no more ironic reflection of this than the fact that the two bases to be built for Israel by the US in the Negev desert to replace the Sinai fields will have to be used as much to keep an electronic eye on the moves of the 60 F-15 and F5E fighter bombers that Washington supplied the Saudis with last summer as they will to keep the Egyptians at bay.

And the business about the strategic value of the settlements in the Rafiah Approaches is arrant nonsense. Every self-respecting Israeli toddler knows that when the Syrian army attacked on the Golan Heights in October 1973, there was valuable time wasted –for it was necessary to mount a hasty rescue operation to save the lightly-armed civilian settlers. There is no reason to suppose that the Sinai outposts would have served any more effective military purpose.

> The key . . . will lie in *loosely* linking the Sinai agreement to a vague time-table for the West Bank

They do, however, have an ideological and symbolic significance which amongst the swirling eddies of the Middle East – where the 'ism's' are still very much in the present tense – is not to be lightly dismissed. Only Menachem Begin was capable of persuading Israel to exchange territory for peace. He has, it is true, always been a diehard opponent of any form of territorial compromise. Resignation from the National Unity Government in 1970 over the adoption of UN resolution 242; screaming blue murder about the Sinai and Golan disengagement agreements (more slashes at the sausage); and earlier in his career advocating war to liberate East Jerusalem and the West Bank from the Hashemite yoke are only some of the more outstanding landmarks in a career liberally strewn with the rhetoric and – when possible – the practice of unashamedly expansionist Zionism.

BUT BEGIN comes from a political movement which has never had any pretentions to social progress, construction, rural settlement or 'knowing' the Arabs – as Labour leaders were always fond of saying. Revisionist Zionism has always displayed a marked contempt for the classic 'dunam by dunam' approach of the Labour movement. It wanted *political* solutions of a grandiose and dramatic kind that were at odds – stylistically if not substantially – with the plodding fabianism of its hated socialist rivals.

While Chaim Weizmann, David Ben-Gurion and co were hassling endlessly with the British Mandatory authorities over more land, more Jewish self-defence, more immigrants and occasionally trying – however hopelessly – to come to terms with the Arabs, Vladimir Jabotinsky and his Revisionists were demanding a Jewish state on *both* sides of the Jordan, massive Jewish immigration, a Jewish army and to hell with the Arabs, whose presence – when they (specifically Begin's Irgun) were not trying to kill them – they totally ignored.

Thus temperamentally, Menachem Begin was far more suited than anyone on the Left to respond positively to the idea of a political solution with the largest and most important of Israel's Arab enemies – even at the cost of denting the myth a little (not *his* myth of course) and agreeing, however reluctantly, to abandon the Sinai settlements. His regrets on that score were undoubtedly genuine, if only because of the tarnishing effect it was bound to have on his image as Mr Greater Israel and the vitriolic attacks he could expect – and suffered – at the hands of some of the more hysterical of his erstwhile followers.

Until the secret history of the Camp David summit is written, the world will not know exactly what made Begin change his mind on the settlement question. Notwithstanding breezy denials by the Israelis that any American pressure was involved, it is clear that the atmosphere of good cheer and amity conjured up by the sylvan surroundings and the sporting antics of the participants is not the whole story about what went on at Carter's Maryland retreat. As one senior Israeli noted wryly later: 'The hand that feeds you can make you do all sorts of things.'

Those imperial digits were kept very busy during the tripartite marathon. The American draft proposal underwent no less than 23 revisions before being accepted by both sides, and that, by all accounts, was only at the 11th hour of the 11th day. Until then the sullen and frustrated newshounds waiting outside had pounced eagerly on every scrap of rumour, gossip or misinformation thrown to them over the electronic fences and fed them indefatigably to a bewildered world.

THERE is an immense difference between the specific, concrete conditions of the 'Framework for the conclusion of a peace treaty between Israel and Egypt' and the

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'The hand that feeds you can make you do all sorts of things' – Israeli official, after Sadat, Dayan and Begin met at Camp David

transparently vague and dangerously ambiguous character of the 'Framework for Peace in the Middle East.' The nitty-gritty of the West Bank/Gaza problem seems to have been deliberately circumvented to enable each side to imbue the purported solution with a meaning favourable to itself. Apart from the current 'misunderstanding' between Begin and Carter over whether the freeze on Israeli settlement activity is to last for the three months budgeted for the conclusion of the peace treaty or for the five years allotted to solve the West Bank issue, the establishment of a Palestinian autonomy has only the slimmest chances of success.

The abortive visit to East Jerusalem recently of roving US Middle East envoy Alfred Atherton – a sort of poor man's Kissinger – provided whoever needed it with the most tangible possible evidence that for the moment no serious political figure on the West Bank was prepared to endorse the autonomy plan. Only a small group of traditionally pro-Hashemite figures – mostly ex-Jordanian officials – gave their private blessing to the scheme, in the hope that it will lead to the eventual restoration of Jordanian sovereignty and help them get their jobs back.

They were significantly outnumbered, however, by a larger group of Hussein's more lukewarm friends who sided with local PLO opinion, which correctly sees the plan as little more than a milk-and-water version of Begin's original 26-point peace plan, designed to leave 'open' the question of sovereignty, and in effect to perpetuate Israeli control.

Only massive American and Saudi pressure, which would have to be accompanied by some kind of incentive – presumably a promise of some kind of Jordanian control over East Jerusalem – could bring Hussein into the picture. He well remembers the challenge to his throne in 'Black' September 1970 and must be careful not to antagonise a PLO which is understandably concerned about its future. Although at the moment his sad little truncated kingdom is sitting pretty on the fence, backed by Syria and more hardline rejectionists and wooed by Washington and Cairo, this cannot go on indefinitely. Sooner or later he will have to choose. And when he does the prospects for a solution of the West Bank issue will become much clearer.

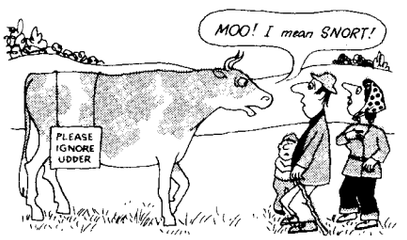
The two components of the Camp David accords may be judged on their respective merits. But the most significant aspect of the package – the one that has enraged Sadat's Arab enemies and delighted the Israelis – is that there is no linkage between the two. What this means is that Israel and Egypt can go ahead and make peace while the future of the West Bank remains unclear. And this is in spite of reports that highly-placed and suspiciously oft-quoted Egyptian officials are to demand linkage. Although Carter's cautious insistence last week that the Washington talks *will* relate the Sinai and West Bank issues did raise hackles and the spectre of a breakdown, it is hard to see Sadat and Begin backtracking at this late stage.

Too much is at stake. If the bilateral peace comes off Sadat will regain what Nasser lost so ignominiously in 1967 and be able to turn his attention (as last week's cabinet changes imply he really intends to do) to the pressing problems of Egypt's ramshackle economy and a population that has just hit the 40 million mark. Begin will effectively neutralize any military threat from Cairo, isolate Egypt in the Arab world and keep his options on the West Bank open at least for long enough to allow time and Arab squabbling to work for Israel.

THE KEY to keeping Egypt and Israel moving towards peace while placating and encouraging the moderate Arabs will probably lie in some US-inspired mechanism *loosely* linking the implementation of the Sinai agreement to a vague time-table for progress on the West Bank. Israel will not like this, but will find it difficult to resist such a condition if it is presented sufficiently forcefully by Carter.

The West Bank plan includes little to recommend it to those who believe that the plight of the Palestinians is still the nub of the Middle East conflict. It is clear that it will be some time before it is possible to arrange for a 'self-governing authority' to

This England 1974/78



☐ A cow disguised as a bull is being used to deter people from a farmland footpath at Langleybury, near Watford, Herts. — *Daily Telegraph.*

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Cartoon from the Jerusalem Post

be 'freely elected' to replace the military government. What Washington has been calling 'a very tangible withdrawal' is in fact redeployment into 'specified locations' and a decrease in Israel's military strength from 11,000 to about 6,000. Nothing has been gained by Begin's constant reiteration, from almost before the ink was dry on the summit accords that the Israeli army and settlements will remain in 'Judea and Samaria' for ever. Israel's finest satirical journalist wrote last week, in the spirit of absurdity prompted by Begin's antics, that the premier intends to move the evacuated Sinai settlers to new sites on the West Bank.

But should the Palestinians entirely eschew the idea of participating in the autonomy scheme? Compared with the grand heights of 1974, when Yasser Arafat offered the UN General Assembly the choice between the gun – conspicuously protruding from his hip holster – and the olive branch, their fortunes are at low ebb. Their right, bestowed by the Rabat summit that same year, to 'establish an independent national authority under the leadership of the PLO over all liberated territory,' has never looked quite so hollow as it does today. The liquidator of Nasserism has sold out to the imperialists, with perhaps a nod and a wink or two from the Saudis and made a deal with the Jews.

The Palestine Liberation Organization, to which National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski recently bid a cheerless farewell and which Carter – with an eye on Begin and the Jewish vote – compared to the Nazis, is not mentioned in the Camp David agreements. The Palestinians suffer from what could be described as a rejection syndrome. On most occasions when they might actually have made some progress in their national struggle by accepting the offers that were made to them, their reaction was to bury their heads in the burning sands.

It has become something of a cliche to say this, and one must beware of misleading historical parallels, but the Palestinians could learn a lot from how the Zionists managed, despite British dithering and Arab hostility, to emerge from the chrysalis of a semi-autonomous political committee into independent statehood. The idea is not that startling. Said Hammami, the PLO's representative in London until he was devoured by his own revolution, was one man who understood this. And there are others. In 1976 the PLO had considerable success in the West Bank municipal elections, fielding 'independent' candidates who everyone knew supported the PLO.

The same could be done with the autonomy scheme, perhaps laying the foundation for the eventual creation of a sovereign Palestinian entity between Israel and Jordan. Asked recently by a persistent interviewer what he would do if the West Bank/Gaza autonomy declared itself to be a Palestinian state, Begin replied – in what was almost a parody of his pedantic belief in legal obligation – that this would **contravene** the Camp David accords. A more straightforward reply was that Israel would 'not stand idly by' and let this happen. However bad it would be for Israel's image (although come to think of it Assad's 'peacekeeping' in Lebanon doesn't seem to have done Syria's reputation much harm), the spectacle of military intervention to strangle a Palestinian state at birth would be no more than the logical conclusion of everything that Begin has said and done so far.

THE TRUTH is that it matters little what the PLO does. When imperial powers embark on grand designs, seeking uninterrupted oil supplies, stability for their economies and security for their allies, clients and watchdogs, then problems like that of the Palestinians retain only marginal significance. And in threatening to bring terror to the heart of the beast by attacking US installations in America and abroad, the PLO clearly recognizes how far down the league it has been relegated.

The American vision of the new Middle East, revolving around an axis of Saudi Arabia, Iran, Egypt and Israel, with ramifications as far afield as Kurdistan, Chad, Zaire, Eritrea and the Gulf states, requires the satisfactory solution of issues outstanding between those parties – and nothing more. Much remains to be done if this vision – or nightmare – is to become a reality.

The Saudis, the Jordanians and the Syrians, as well as the peripheral moderates like Morroco and Sudan, have to be persuaded that they have something to gain by following Sadat's lead. Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Golan will be the baits and Israeli fears that the Sinai agreement creates a dangerous precedent are not unfounded.

The experience of the past year and the numerous unanswered questions about the immediate future make speculation unwise. Foremost among these imponderables is whether inter-Arab tensions might now be played out to the bitter end in Lebanon, with the Syrians, prodded by Moscow, provoking greater Israeli intervention. It is a revealing, if cynical, testimony to the power of the forces at work in the Middle East today that in spite of the carnage in Beirut and the implied threat to its northern flank, Israel has thus far refrained from being drawn directly into the whirlpool of destruction that is making Maronite separatism the first casualty of the post-Camp David era.

The chances of a full-scale Arab-Israeli clash have receded dramatically. Although Israeli tourists will not enjoy shopping in Cairo bazaars if there are bombs in Jerusalem, there is an ineluctable quality to the peace that is breaking out between Egypt and Israel. It is the only possible monument – partial and fragile though it is – to the many thousands who have died in four bloody wars.

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Tim Shawcross on the problems that SALT III will leave untouched

The new surrealism of the missile men

At first sight the prospect of rehousing America's entire land based intercontinental ballistic Minuteman missile system on the Western side of the Colorado mountain range may appear somewhat far fetched. But within the nightmare logic of the nuclear analysts, it's a conceivable, if expensive option. The proposed advantage is that if the Soviets launched a pre-emptive strike on the United States, the trajectory of their re-entry vehicles would be such that the 30 degree slope of the mountains would give a high probability of wasted missions.

The rationale of this surreal suggestion arises from intelligence estimates – endorsed by the US Secretary of Defence, Harold Brown – that by the mid-1980s America's land based missiles might be effectively taken out by a surprise Russian attack. With the new generation of SS-series systems being developed and deployed the feasibility and cost of such an attack is looking increasingly attractive (it's the word the analysts use).

By the late 1980s the Minuteman III will have 15 years of inactive service behind it and will be in fairly drastic need of major overhaul. Not because it will be rusting to pieces but because it inhabits a subterranean dwelling called an underground silo.

Because the silo is fixed and because the Russians have a comparatively new and powerful range of ICBMs, America's 1054 land based missiles will be strategically vulnerable. The Minuteman III was first deployed in 1970 – it can carry three 170 kiloton warheads. The Russian SS 18 Mark Two was introduced in 1976 and can carry eight megaton warheads. At the moment the SS system means that the Soviets are a generation ahead in the ICBM arms race and it's a lead they will retain well into the eighties.

Of course, knocking out the other side's ICBMs does not guarantee victory – a concept in itself alien to the vocabulary of theoretical nuclear warfare. But theoretical capacity to do so does improve the bargaining position of the side which is acknowledged to possess it. Deterrence short of war is, after all, supposed to be the name of the game.

With both sides reliant on a triad for their defence systems – consisting of nuclear bombers, submarines and missiles – there is an obvious advantage to be gained by knocking out one entire leg of the nuclear force. Indeed, it is argued that once you possess the capability to launch an effective first strike against your adversary's land based ICBMs, combined with the ability seriously to damage satellite communications, then your opponent's ability to bring into play another part of his triad will be severely restricted. For example submarines are particularly vulnerable to communication breakdown, and bombers are relatively easy targets, especially on the ground.

Needless to say the Pentagon expresses much consternation at the idea that Minuteman might become a sitting duck instead of a bird of prey. In a speech last March, Jimmy Carter mentioned this increasing vulnerability, and more recently one of his Chiefs of Staff pronounced against the dangers of signing a SALT II agreement without making some provision for redressing the balance. At the same time his chief aide on arms control, Paul Warnke (since resigned), publicly stated that SALT II will not tackle the question of strategic vulnerability. If that proves to be the case there will soon be a lot of worried generals with high blood pressure walking around the Pentagon. That in itself could be a destabilising factor.

The main hope at the moment is for a system called Multiple Aim Points (MAP), to be used in conjunction with the new MX missile system which America is developing. Multiple Aim Points are designed to confuse the opposition. At the moment the only obstacles standing in the way of the Soviets having a reasonably successful chance of launching a devastating first stike against the silos are the problems of inaccuracy, of missiles failing to take off, and the 'fratricide effect' – whereby one missile goes haywire due to the explosive side effects of the one that has just landed.

It has been calculated that if the accuracy of the SS 18 system were marginally improved, each missile would have a 99 per cent chance of destroying its target. The American response has been to start devising a system which will remove this single target certainty (known as SSKP – Single Shot Kill Probability) from the Soviet attack. By having Multiple Aim Points the Russians will no longer have the means of ascertaining from which point the missile will be launched.

Going mobile, preferably with the MX, is the current Pentagon preoccupation and, besides moving mountains, a whole host of weird and wonderful suggestions have recently surfaced. 'Off road random crawling' whereby nuclear juggernauts carrying ICBMs would prowl the countryside in an unpredictable manner was one of them – this was dismissed on the grounds of the high anxiety it might cause to officials and politicians. It was also thought that the missiles might be a target for dissident groups. Another possibility canvassed was concealment of ICBMs on the railways among ordinary traffic (see illustration). Fear of railway strikes, terrorists and bad weather have put paid to this suggestion. A further option has been to put ICBMs in the bottom of lakes to be transported by a 'lake bottom crawling vehicle'; this proposal admits that ice coverage could cause problems for many months of the year but it is not seen as an insurmountable obstacle. American officials have dismissed this option on the grounds of anticipated public hostility.

Moving ICBMs along the canals has also been mooted, although the slow moving nature of canal traffic would be a severe disadvantage. The movement of missile barges could hardly be kept secret from foreign agents, reconnaissance satellites and groups who are sentimental about canals.

One option which has received a weighty analysis comes from America's Boeing corporation. Their proposal is for an air-mobile ICBM as a solution to the vulnerability of the fixed-site Minutemen. A modified version of the 747 jumbo would accommodate four 100,000 lb ICBMs or 8 x 50 000 lb missiles. (MX could weigh as much as 172,000 lbs). With each jumbo costing about 40 million dollars, the expense would certainly be fearsome, and if it was used with the MX they would require no less than 100 widebodied jets to carry the heavyweight missile. Despite Boeing's formidable lobbying capacities, it seems unlikely to carry much weight with defence planners.

The most favoured option at the moment

Art Buchwald

Pea and Walnuts

WASHINGTON — In case you don't keep up with these things, the latest Pentagon toy being developed by the U.S. Air Force is the MX, which is a method of moving Minuteman missiles through miles of underground tunnels so that the Russians won't know where they are. We're talking about $30 or $40 billion if the Air Force gets to build the system, which the general in charge describes as being like the "shell game where you have one pea and three walnuts."

Buchwald

Nobody wants to fool the Russians more than I do when it comes to pinpointing our missiles. But the cost of the project seems so great that I think we should seek out alternate ways of accomplishing the be, and the Russians would go nuts trying to figure out where the missile train was. It would accomplish the same goal as the MX program at half the cost.

If the Russians protested that we were not living up to the SALT agreement, the Pentagon could invite them to send over their top generals and have them ride on an Amtrak train to prove the Air Force has no control over how the United States runs its railroads.

Once the Soviet command realizes that it could never depend on knowing where a missile train is going to be, it would be deterred from launching a first strike on our Minuteman sites.

The advantage of the plan is that the money Amtrak received for this defense contract could be spent on new equipment and rails for its civilian passenger service above ground and we would no longer have to subsidize this mode of transportation.

Satire and reality in the nuclear missile game: in the International Herald Tribune, September 30, Art Buchwald proposed that missiles be carried on the American railways. In fact, the idea has been considered as a serious possibility.

The company which should have gotten it is Amtrak, which runs most of the passenger railroads in the United States. The beauty of turning it over to the Amtrak people is that they already have the equipment and the know-how to fool anyone when it comes to figuring out where one of their trains is at any given time.

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seems to be what's known as the 'buried trench mobility system'. Missiles would be housed in concrete tunnels between ten and twenty miles long at the Yuma gunnery range in Arizona and each missile moved at random along the rails inside, to emerge at any one of a number of holes in the ground that could be used as a launch site. With the mobile mode appearing a determined ambition for the Americans both before and after SALT II it looks as if it will be the turn of the Russians to start worrying when SALT III approaches. By then they may have lost their ability to contemplate a first strike against the American silos and by 1985 it is probable that the US will have the MX which will be well in advance of the Soviet SS system – to say nothing of lasers, proton beams and killer satellites.

Whatever hopes one may have for SALT II it would seem that the way the cards are stacked at the moment, weapons systems are being *introduced* rather than restricted, in order to avoid 'destabilisation'. In the old days the logic of MAD – Mutual Assured Destruction – seemed a reasonable deterrent in itself and an incentive towards quantitative reductions in the nuclear arsenal. Today, analysts are increasingly talking about limited nuclear exchanges or LSOs (Limited Strategic Options), as opposed to the old theory of reducing the number of arms on both sides to maintain equilibrium.

The arms race has taken a subtle shift into a new dimension where it's no longer simply a question of numbers. The American fear of losing their land-based missiles is also an indication that mushroom clouds are no longer so closely associated – at least in the planners' minds – with urban holocausts. Targets are becoming military and in the minds of the Politburo and the Pentagon such a strategy must inevitably make the prospect of war less appalling – one might say more inviting. Furthermore, strategic policies that change to accommodate new developments – as in the case of going mobile – give rise to insurmountable problems of verification.

So, in addition, arms limitation talks are and will be dominated by the threats of weapons that may be introduced at a future date. As long as the speed of technology continues to outpace the lengthy and protracted negotiations of the nuclear arms dealers, American and Soviet arsenals are unlikely to become less threatening, or more stabilising.

Paddy French:

The trail of Sir Julian Hodge

The Welsh banker Sir Julian Hodge is about to step down as chairman of the controversial Hodge Group. His departure coincides with a major shake-up of the Cardiff-based combine as its owners, the Standard Chartered Bank, try to persuade the Office of Fair Trading to grant the group vital consumer credit licences. The OFT's Director General, Gordon Borrie, has warned two Hodge subsidiaries that he was 'minded to refuse' their applications – a decision which threatens most of the Group's business.

Sir Julian founded his empire (whose assets now amount to £320 million) with just £1,000 in 1946. His early success was built on a simple formula – Hodge garages sold cars with Hodge hire purchase and Hodge insurance. By 1961 when the first of his companies went public he was a millionaire. His group expanded rapidly until 1966 when accountants uncovered bad debts worth £1.5 million. Profits then remained stagnant until the early 1970's.

His political friendships with Cardiff Labour MPs Jim Callaghan and George Thomas were to yield better dividends. When Callaghan was Chancellor, Hodge accompanied him to meetings of the IMF. George Thomas, as Welsh Secretary of State, personally boosted Hodge's campaign for an independent Welsh bank and it was he who collected money for a gold watch to commemorate the knighthood conferred on Hodge by the Wilson cabinet in 1970. When the Commercial Bank of Wales opened in 1971, Callaghan and Thomas were directors, each holding shares worth £5,000. But perhaps the most bizarre episode in this strange alliance between millionaire financier and socialist MPs was Callaghan's bid to have Labour activists sell Hodge car insurance to party supporters with commissions going into party funds. It was narrowly defeated by the 1971 Labour Conference.

The sale of the Hodge Group to Standard Chartered in 1973 gave Hodge and his family nearly £14 million and saved them from the secondary banking crisis of 1974. The sale was based on record profits of more than £8 million; in the next 16 months, however, profits collapsed to £2 million.

Of the 81,000 applications for consumer credit licences sent to the Office of Fair Trading, only 48 have received 'minded to refuse' notices and Hodge is by far the largest. The OFT is not obliged to give reasons, but it is known that in Hodge's case they fall into two main categories: concern about the vertical integration of the Group and its interlocking boards of directors; and the need to bring Hodge brokers under much closer control.

As far as Standard Chartered is concerned, the action is highly damaging to its own reputation and comes at a sensitive time, when the bank is bidding $372 million for Union Bancorp Inc., a major Californian concern. Standard Chartered has always been troubled by Hodge's aggressive pursuit of the second mortgage business (which boosted the Group's record profits in the early 1970's). Pyramid sellers such as the cosmetic firm Holiday Magic teamed up with brokers offering second mortgages from finance houses and made a fortune, especially out of Britain's immigrant communities. By the time the victims hit back the pyramid sellers had vanished, many of the finance houses had collapsed and Hodge was left as a large and visible target.

In June last year Standard Chartered instructed the Hodge Group to discontinue its second mortgage business and it has now decided to end the Group's separate identity. The Hodge banking subsidiaries in Ireland and Jersey have been incorporated into the Standard Chartered framework and the name of Hodge taken out of their titles. Two weeks ago the bank's chairman, Lord Barber, announced the resignations of 13 Hodge directors including Sir Julian, his sister and his wife Lady Moira. A team of new directors, led by Standard Chartered's vice chairman Ronnie Lane, will have the task of absorbing all branches of Julian S. Hodge and Co. into the Standard network. One hundred or so branches of Hodge Finance will probably also be reconstituted under a different name. It looks as though the OFT will now accept these measures and grant consumer credit licences to the two Hodge companies.

Standard Chartered may be hoping to give the impression that it was ignorant of what went on in Cardiff. But as far back as 1969, the Chartered Bank (which merged with Standard in 1970) held 22 per cent of the Hodge Group. Chartered's chairman, William Pullen, was deputy chairman of the Group from August 1969 until he too resigned a fortnight ago. Standard Chartered's directors were well aware of Hodge's methods by 1973.

One dramatic piece of evidence has come to light in the form of a report written by a senior Hodge executive in 1975 (Hodge and Standard Chartered refuse to confirm or deny its authority). Covering £54 millions of second mortgages taken in 30 months following October 1972 by four of the Group's companies including Julian S. Hodge, the report reveals that 10,600 borrowers were more than two months behind with their repayments. More than 2,000 had borrowed more than the security of their property – which means that either the borrower or the broker gave false information on the forms filled in to secure the loans. Some 'defaulters' were among the 1,700 who had taken out *third* mortgages either from the *same* Hodge company or from another group subsidiary. The report also shows that many of the 10,600 people in arrears were conned by unscrupulous brokers into taking heavy-interest loans they could ill-afford – and which they are still repaying. When the Hodge directors received the report, they apparently took no action.

Had the OFT sunk its teeth a little further into Standard Chartered by using its investigative powers, it might have extracted further information about the total number of 'defaulters' thrown up by Hodge's second mortgage business. It might then have refused the licences until the bank came up with a viable scheme to rescue the debt-ridden borrowers who were taken for a ride.

Sir Julian, still chairman of the Commercial Bank of Wales and the Avana Group, a South Wales food firm, now plans to devote himself to setting up a £7 million Welsh Business School and to the affairs of his £10 million charity, the Jane Hodge Foundation. Two weeks ago, George Thomas opened the £750,000 Jane Hodge Home for the Elderly in Cardiff. Embarking on a tribute to the local bankers generosity, the Speaker of the House of Commons got his words a little scrambled: 'A lot of people', he said, 'are in debt to Sir Julian . . . '

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London Diary

☐ Sir Julian Hodge, resigning chief of a Welsh financial empire and close friend of the Prime Minister, goes on the BBC *Money Programme* to talk about his life and work. Asked whether he regretted entering the second mortgage business, Sir Julian (certain of whose doings are reported opposite) came up with a historic reply: 'I couldn't possibly have avoided that' he protested.

Oh, dear. I would like one day to take Sir Julian to Hackney (or to Birmingham, or to Lionfield) to meet some of the West Indians who fell foul of the pyramid selling swindles of 1972 and 1973. Skilled hucksters from companies called Holiday Magic, Golden Chemicals etc sent agents into the West Indian communities. They called huge meetings, promising fortunes to anyone who joined a scheme to sell lipstick, shampoo and other such necessities to their friends and relations.

In scenes of revivalist hysteria, thousands joined. At once – often on the same evening – they were approached by a representative of a 'bank' with offers of a loan to pay for the products they would sell. The only security wanted for the loan, often as much as £3,000 at penal interest rates, was the borrower's house.

By far the most energetic of the banks involved in these deals was Julian S Hodge Ltd (or other Hodge subsidiaries).

The hucksters vanished with their cheques. In many cases, the borrowers never even saw the products they were meant to buy. But in all cases they had contracted a 'legal' debt, and the 'banks' demanded payment. Sir Julian should meet Myrtle Green of Hackney, who 'joined' a pyramid company. She paid his bank back a thousand pounds out of her miserable earnings. Her neighbours, Daphne and Richard Johnson, clothing workers, paid £400; Hugh Jones a garage mechanic in the same area who was earning £18 a week, paid £700. And so on and so on hundreds of times over. Sir Julian said on television that his company didn't 'repossess' anyone's home (a lovely word that, 'repossess'). But the threat of eviction was freely used to squeeze money from these desperate people. Eviction orders were sought in the courts by Hodge; bailiffs were sent in and even locks changed. The houses were saved only when the householders ran, in panic, to their defence associations.

What is Sir Julian's defence for his company's part in this disgusting business? 'We were not the only people' he whined. 'What about the other companies?' Like the man caught with his pants down during a gangbang: 'It wasn't only me, guv.'

☐ Trial by jury has always been a bastion of what is loosely known as our free society. Henry Fonda in *Twelve Angry Men* personified the triumph of the common man's reason over prejudice and judicial bias. He persuaded all eleven of his colleagues to change their minds.

Fonda wouldn't stand a chance in Britain today. Roy Jenkins put paid to him and his ilk, with the introduction of majority verdicts ten years ago. And this Labour administration seems as hell-bent as its predecessor on cutting-down the elementary liberties afforded by jury trial. A whole host of cases, (police assaults, homosexual offences, etc.) where defendants used to be able at least to appeal to a jury are now left entirely to judges and magistrates.

Now Sam Silkin, the Attorney General, has introduced an official system of jury vetting. In his statement last week he admitted that the practice had grown up 'prior to 1974'. Instead of bringing the matter before Parliament while it was discussing the Juries Bill in 1974, Silkin chose to develop secret guidelines to formalise the vetting procedure, which he eventually issued in August 1975. Since then, he says, he has been notified of 'only 25' cases where juries have been vetted by the security services and the DPP. 'Only 25'! In three years! 'It is evident', says Silkin, 'that a juror's political connections are wholly irrelevant unless they are of so extreme a character as to make it reasonably likely that they will prevent the juror from trying a case fairly ...'

There are obvious dangers here. Suppose some future enlightened public prosecutor was confronted with Samuel Silkin as a possible juror. Might he not consider that the man's views are so extreme in character, so abjectly toadying, that is, to the judges and to the law lords, so implacably hostile to all law reforms which he himself once espoused that he could not possibly try any case fairly?

☐ Prominent members of SPUC (which as far as I'm concerned stands for Society for the Propagation of Unwanted Children) have been railing against a plan to provide facilities for women to have babies by artificial insemination. At least this shows up these people in their true colours. They are against women deciding *anything* about bearing children. According to SPUC's dark doctrines, women may not decide when to conceive, they may not have an abortion if they conceive against their will and they may not even choose to have babies if they can't or don't want to get pregnant by copulation. The whole thing has to be left to 'nature' and to the law of the cave-man (not the cave-woman).

In case you think that it is only the *Catholic* Church which is bigoted on these matters, I recommend this statement last week from the very Protestant and Very Reverend Bishop of Worcester:

> 'The unknown father raises a great many moral problems, including the ultimate responsibility for the child'.

Women may give birth to children, tend them in infancy, feed them, clothe them, worry about them all their lives. But as to 'ultimate responsibility', well, they're not really up to that, are they Bishop?

☐ What is going on on Thames Television's *TV Eye* (formerly *This Week*)? It's been a marvellous programme for years but the team which made it so is being crushed. David Elstein, *This Week*'s producer in its heyday, has been replaced by Mike Townson from the BBC. Jeremy Isaacs, the Thames programme controller who always defended *This Week* against attacks from the IBA, and others, has left the company because he couldn't stand its new managing director, Brian Cowgill.

The effect on the programme has been catastrophic. Jonathan Dimbleby's film on Nicaragua was taken out of the schedules last week and replaced by some awful tripe about heart transplants. The previous week, an even-handed introduction written by Dimbleby for a nasty film about Rhodesia was also cut. Townson surprised his staff with the explanation that Britain was a predominantly white country and that Rhodesia should therefore be reported 'from the white point of view.'

I suspect that the introduction of safe executives like Cowgill and Townson is deliberate and political. David Elstein, Jonathan Dimbleby, Peter Taylor and others on *This Week* have infuriated the authorities by their open contempt for that spurious 'objectivity' which always supports the status quo. As George Orwell wrote in a letter shortly before he died:

> 'The more one is aware of political bias, the more one can be independent of it, and the more one claims to be impartial, the more one is biased'.

The 'security' spooks who infest the television hierarchy understand that very well.

☐ Some people were surprised when the latest Ford offer was turned down last week. I wasn't. I spent an hour or two the night before travelling back from a meeting in darkest Essex with Jupiter Harry (yes, that is his name, though he's got used to being called 'Harry' by his workmates). Jupiter came to Britain from Dominica twenty years ago, and is now one of the most popular shop stewards in the Dagenham body plant (race relations experts might like to note that he was proposed for his post by white shop stewards and unanimously elected by show of hands in a predominantly white department).

According to Jupiter, the mood of the workers in Fords is tougher than anything he has known in the past six years. Jupiter sports a huge badge, proclaiming TWENTY POUNDS ON THE PAY: ONE HOUR OFF THE DAY. The Ford management and the union leaders are going to find it very difficult to get the workers to accept less.

I hope the workers win it all. A victory at Fords would transform the mood of despondency into which so many Labour supporters have been dragged on the coat-tails of the Labour government. And it would do more for race relations than a thousand race relations officers. As Jupiter Harry said at the meeting: 'As soon as you come out on strike, the racialists just fade away'.

☐ Aims of Industry, an extremist organisation, is suing Renee Short for something she said at the Labour Party conference. Winston Churchill, a Tory MP, is suing Eric Avebury for something he wrote in a letter to *The Times*. What can I say about wealthy organisations and individuals who make their reputations by invective against others and, when they are attacked, reach for their lawyers?

Nothing. I'm afraid. Or nothing that isn't libellous.

Paul Foot

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ British viewers are notoriously reluctant to switch channels. A few weeks ago 15 per cent of them continued to watch a blank screen in Birmingham during an industrial dispute rather than see what was available on the BBC channels – *Evening Standard* (Jonathan Nicholl)

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First Person

Arthur Marshall

Be fruitful and multiply

Until I was about thirty-five, which, for the inquisitive, was three decades and a bit ago, I didn't really much care for wine. I have since made up for it in quite a big and elaborate way but in those days I would have gladly settled for a glass of orangeade instead. I disliked, for one thing, the time-consuming pantomime that often went with the production of some cobwebby bottle lying sideways in its wickerwork nest. There then came the examination of the cork and the consultation of those little cards that the cognoscenti used to carry about with them and which informed them whether 1932 was a 'good' year for claret or whatever and then presumed, on whose authority I do not know, to allot marks for this brand of wine or that. And after that one endured the repellent sniffings and the unlovely snufflings, the rolling round the tongue the holding of the glass up to the light, all of them actions performed to the accompaniment of a flood of pretentious jabber about which Maurice Bowra, that forceful realist and non-admirer of affectations, had a word to say ('I'm bored by all that wine rubbish. There's only one thing in wine that I'm interested in now. *Quantity.*').

We don't have many grapes in Appleton but regular readers who may have been worrying, in their kind and courteous way, about what sort of a fruit crop we have been gathering from our richly soiled (and I speak agriculturally rather than in terms of something needing Daz) south west, need worry no more. Unfurrow the brow. Our crop has been, frankly, totally tip-top and the fruits of the earth have, in their due season, been our happy portion on a friendly give and take and share and share alike basis. Throughout the summer we have been nourished at frequent intervals by the Bultitudes' nectarines and peaches, nurtured beneath glass I need hardly say and perched on tissue paper before being graciously distributed in generously-sized chip-baskets with a merry little note tucked inside ('Happy nibblings! Giles and Bunty'). The soft fruit season gives my Cousin Madge a chance to shine, her strawbugs and her liberal gifts of them being rightly famous all along the valley. Her strawberries are, I think, Royal Sovereign but I wonder if a variety still exists that used to call itself Madame Kooi, such a charming name and whom one saw either as a petite little Japanese lady, parasol open and quietly tending her berries in the intervals of wondering what on earth can be keeping Lieutenant Pinkerton, or as an Australian housewife down by the billabong, short of a husband and screaming 'Cooey'.

Well then, my neighbours at *Dun Roamin* are noted for their Conference pears, an offering of which will be along any minute now (such a poor arrangement on the part of Dame Nature that the best pears have only a brief 48 hours when they may be said to be at perfect concert pitch), and dear Miss Entwhistle is here, there and everywhere with her plums, her blue Czars early on, and then later the bulging and opulent perfection of her Victorias, each one a juicy *bonne bouche* of health-giving Vitamin C. A tiny way down the scale of excellence, even though each one is blessed by the church, come Canon Mountjoy's damsons from his relentlessly prolific trees, each damson about the size and hardness of those round metallic pellets that used to be fed, and perhaps still are, into siphons for making soda-water in the home. Ideal for a solid, all-purpose jam, of course, and all right for stewing if you're really up against it for a pudding, but I do sometimes rather wonder whether that Dutch disease (so impertinent of it not to keep itself to itself in Holland) might not be persuaded, instead of finally finishing off all our beautiful elms, to switch to damsons.

But where, you rightly ask, does 'Myrtlebank' stand in all this display of generosity? Where is that give and take of which I spoke? What is there to set against those nectarines, peaches, strawberries, pears, plums and, er, damsons? I have no need to hang my head in shame and my answer is a simple one. Apples. For these my friends look to me and they seldom look in vain. I am fortunate to have an orchard which, relatively protected from frost, covers three acres in the very heart of Appleton and, intersected by a stream, slopes gently upwards from the flower-filled grounds of 'Myrtlebank'. It provides a feast of blossom for the eye in April and early May, and now there is a feast of another kind, every bough laden beneath as bumper a harvest as we have ever before experienced. I am now trying, in imitation of the French *vendange* and its grape-gathering, to popularise, when it comes to apple-gathering, the word *pommange*. 'We can't come to lunch, Sylvia, because of the *pommange*' would sound rather well down the telephone wires. It is, as you see, a skilful blending of the words *pomme* and *manger* and it would give the whole undertaking a distinctive frog cachet.

Rich red ripeness is everywhere. 'Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples' sings *The Song of Solomon*, and if the writer, who must by now be a senior citizen and can therefore take advantage of BR's concessionary rates for the elderly, cares to board the 10.30 from Paddington and then make a bee-line for us, we can do just that. The early and brightly-hued Beauty of Bath, first in the field and such a source of pleasure to wasps, were of course picked in August, but fully available are the succulence of James Grieve and the mouth-watering Ellison's Orange, not to speak of the Bramleys and Monarchs that, sliced and sugared, nestle so nutritiously beneath the pudding's pie-crust. Picking all these delights presents several problems. Apples, like actresses, bruise easily and should not be allowed to thud to the ground. It is, however, impossible to pick without dislodging occasionally some shy pippin coyly concealing itself behind a twig and I know of few things in life more immediately painful than receiving a sizeable Lane's Prince Albert, descending from a height of fifteen feet, on the bridge of the nose. The apples that fall most readily and unerringly onto one's head are called, and what could be more suitable, Newton Wonder. The laws of gravity don't seem to have changed one little bit. Oh and by the way, our cider apples, all four tons of them, are this year to be despatched to admirable Whiteway's; so if next year you notice an attractive new zest and freshness in their product, kindly spare a grateful thought for 'Myrtlebank'.

Roger Woddis

The Destruction of Sir Crackarib

The Press Council has dismissed a charge by Sir Harold Wilson that 'cohorts' of journalists had waged a smear campaign against him in 1974.

The accuser fell down like a story gone cold,
And the cohorts were beaming in 18-point bold;
And the spleen of their pens was like ink in the squid
When the presses rolled out, as they frequently did.

Like the thwarted Napoleon defeated in Spain,
The loser had talked of a vicious campaign:
Like a customer passing an overdrawn cheque,
Sir Crackarib talked through the back of his neck.

And there stood the licensed purveyor of tripe,
With the sweat on his brow, and the ash in his pipe:
And the charges proved baseless, the covers all blown,
The non-crime committed by persons unknown.

And the terror of Huyton felt weak and turned pale
At the findings that cleared the *Express* and the *Mail*;
For the hirelings who worked for Lord Pry and Lord Snoop
Had melted away like a tightly-knit group.

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Letters to the Editor

Foot v. Hitchens

Sir, Christopher Hitchens, purporting to answer my allegation in your last issue, writes: 'Oh yes, and the NEW STATESMAN always urged early and total repeal of the Industrial Relations Act.' He's got it wrong, as usual. So I must ask you to print the full paragraph dealing with the matter which appeared on the front page of the NEW STATESMAN on 19 May, 1972. This was no casual aside but was clearly intended to be a major declaration of NEW STATESMAN policy:

> We believe, like it or not, that the Industrial Relations Act, or something very like it, is here to stay. It would be arrogant and patronising for us to urge the unions to relax and enjoy it, though it does contain some opportunites for union organisation and security. This is not to say that the Act is not grossly unfair in some of its aspects, or that it could not be radically improved. It will not work, however, until those who operate it learn that the law, just as much as politics, is the art of the possible. The unions will make their own accommodation of the Act in their own time, and in their own way. This is not the moment for Labour politicians to curry favour by making promises they cannot keep. Nor does it help much when popularity-seekers within the Parliamentary Party talk eagerly of a new understanding with the unions. There isn't one, and this might be the time for Labour to leave the unions alone while they work out their own destiny.

Fortunately, the Labour politicians whom the NEW STATESMAN was thus advising did not take that advice. A promise to repeal the Industrial Relations Act was made and was later carried out by the present Government. As a result we now have in this country not a perfect law – there are still improvements to be made – but none the less the best framework of law protecting the rights of free trade unions in any country in the world.

Anthony Howard was the editor responsible for the editorial published above; I do not see how he can escape the responsibility for what I described at the time as imbecility of a high order. However, I did on this basis describe him as 'a secret admirer of Mr Heath'. That is too harsh: so one apology to him, but none to the hopelessly inaccurate Hitchens.

MICHAEL FOOT

House of Commons
London SW1

Bruce Page writes: Christopher Hitchens is away on a story, so I thought I'd better look into this myself. Hitchens, of course, should have been aware of the 1972 leader which Mr Foot cites – but the error is mitigated by the fact that he wasn't on the staff then. He was no doubt thinking of two other leaders written during his own time: 9 November 1973 which called the Act 'one of the most disastrous and unmanageable pieces of legislation to reach the statute book in half a century,' and 8 March 1974, which assumed that the 'immediate repeal of the Industrial Relations Act' would be one of the most important, and beneficial, actions of the new Labour Government.

I'm not sure that this kind of Talmudic scholarship gets anyone very far. The point we sought to make by reprinting Mr Foot's words from 1968 was that he thought unemployment intolerable at 400,000 in 1968, and is now a member of a government which tolerates it at 1.4 million. The NEW STATESMAN, under Anthony Howard's editorship, and certainly under mine, has argued consistently and in some detail that this results largely from an intellectual and moral failure to challenge the orthodoxies of the Treasury. I think we, and indeed the whole electorate, deserve a better answer. I invite Mr Foot to provide one.

Sir, One can appreciate Michael Foot's chagrin (NS 13 October) at finding himself the victim of the time-honoured journalistic ploy he must himself have used more than once in his previous manifestation – confronting a politician with some of his past rhetoric, in or out of context. But as an old friend and admirer I know he would want me to correct his curious misapprehension that Anthony Howard was 'Ted Heath's secret admirer'.

Nothing that appeared in the NS during his editorship – and as his deputy I was in a better position than most to judge – could have lent itself to such an interpretation; and he certainly never said anything privately that suggested any admiration for Mr Heath or his policies: quite the reverse.

In fact I would hazard a guess that since his speech in support of the Government's five per cent pay policy at the Tory Party conference Mr Heath stands much higher in the estimation of Michael Foot than he does in that of Anthony Howard.

TOM BAISTOW

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Kent

What the hellikins?

Sir, Could any reader kindly explain to me the meaning of the following words: doppions, sordumes and hellikins? They occur in 'Vespers' by W. H. Auden, where he speaks of 'sordumes of jolly miners' and of a time when 'hellikins cavort through ruined drawing-rooms', and can be found neither in the Concise nor in the 13-volume Oxford English Dictionary. I suspect, from the context, that the doppions and sordumes are some kind of obsolete instruments, and that hellikins might be some equally obsolete weapons. If any linguist of genius should hit upon this enquiry, perhaps he or she would tell me how to render these terms into German as I am stuck in the middle of translating the poem into that language.

MICHAEL STONE

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The Tories and women

Sir, Anna Coote's informative article (NS 13 October), mentions Ms Willan, a Conservative party member incensed by the rule of her local Conservative Club which forbids women from standing at the bar. The Equal Opportunities Commission informed Ms Willan that the Sex Discrimination Act offers her no recourse: private clubs are not covered by the Act.

It is true that institutions can and do continue to provide facilities for one sex only. Schools and private clubs, for example, do not break the law when they restrict entry to one sex only. But where membership of a voluntary body is open to men and women the position is not so clear. There appears to be nothing in the Sex Discrimination Act which allows that body to treat men and women unequally in the benefits, facilities and services which it provides.

MARION LOWE
Women's Rights Officer
National Council for Civil Liberties
186 King's Cross Road
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Sir, Anna Coote's interesting article doesn't properly share credit with our colleagues at NOP. While the first two sets of figures she gives are indeed polls by MORI for the *Daily Express*, the third set is from a poll conducted by NOP in June 1978.

ROBERT M. WORCESTER

MORI
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The camera as chisel

Sir, I have not had the opportunity to read Susan Sontag's book on photography but, judging from Ian McEwan's review (NS 29 September), it is not about photography at all but about propaganda and truth. I suspect that this is all that needs to be said of it, but Mr McEwan, faced with the necessity of writing a review, is like a man who, having been directed on to the wrong train, discovers that it does not stop before Edinburgh – or perhaps, in Mr McEwan's case, London.

Consider a photograph of a sunset over a derelict brickworks. This can be seen in a number of ways: (1) as a photograph of a sunset over a brickworks; (2) as a lofty excursion into the realm of beauty; (3) as a load of sentimental trash; (4) as a very indistinct view of a brickworks; (5) as an indictment of the backwardness of industry. The same sort of thing could be said for a painting – or indeed for a piece of music or the NEW STATESMAN. But, instead of accepting this as inevitable, we are invited to get ourselves into knots about 'the function of photography in our society'.

Photography is a technique (like printing). The function of photography is to produce photographs. A camera is a tool – like a chisel. A chisel can be used to construct a utilitarian wall-bracket or invent a sublime sculpture, possibly a sculpture of a Chinese blowing his nose. Suppose we lump together the wall-bracket and the sculpture and call them both 'woodwork'? Just as we lump together all the products of a camera as 'photography'?

Clearly, it is the word that has in part confused Ms Sontag. It is a perfectly simple word which all ordinary people understand. But, because it is an omnibus word (like writing) covering anything from a bit of trivial reportage to the truly creative, she is obviously confused and starts asking questions that, though they have been asked over and over again, should never be asked. Questions like: Is photography Art? Who knows – or cares – except those who confuse semantics with philosophy (yes, there are plenty of those)?

I happen to like photographing two things: trees and people's bodies. Sometimes people buy them and hang them on their walls. If they don't, I sometimes hang them on my walls. In doing this, am I rendering art obsolete? Is this an act of aggression? Am I facilitating bureaucratic and political control? It would seem so, for these are photographs. In the same way, if Che Guevara chose to get himself dead in the cause of the toiling masses, this must be the fault of Rembrandt. The internal combustion engine was clearly responsible for Hiroshima.

Someone should tell Ms Sontag that there are also chiaroscuro, ambulances, and William Mortensen. Point made? Why didn't Mr McEwan make it?

DON BOND

3 Hereford Street
Enfield
South Australia

All the news that fits

Sir, Your Trotskyist gossip columnist, the Hon Paul Foot, winges (NS 13 October) that the *News of the World* exposes Social Security scroungers, but not those unidentified companies criticised by the Public Accounts Committee. If Mr Foot has managed to discover the secret names why does he not publish them in the NEW STATESMAN? Or his party's own propaganda sheet, *Socialist Worker*? Or pass them to us for publication in the *News of the World*?

It is malicious of him to attempt to initiate a legend of some sibling plot in Bouverie Street. He is correct in stating that I am my brother's brother. But it is dotty of Mr Foot to make more of that than the fact that he is his father's son and his uncle's nephew.

Incidentally, can this Paul Foot who goes on about Fleet Street lunches really be the same Paul Foot who permitted himself to be lunched by me at the Café Royal to discuss a book he was selling to our company for several thousand capitalist pounds?

BERNARD SHRIMSLEY
Editor

News of the World
30 Bouverie Street
London EC4

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1478
1978 Oxford University Press

Jim Corbett's India
Stories selected by R. E. Hawkins

Jim Corbett's stories of his life, and particularly of his tiger hunts, in north India in the 1920s and 30s carry the distinct flavour of their time and place, as well as the simple impression of a nice and brave man. This selection will reward the devoted band of Corbett enthusiasts and introduce him to a new generation of readers. £4.95 *26 October*

A Russian Schoolboy
Sergei Aksákov

This translation of *A Russian Schoolboy* was first published in the World's Classics in 1924. It vividly recalls the early life of its author, born almost 200 years ago in the province of Orenburg, near Siberia. Illustrated £4.50
26 October

Karl Marx and World Literature
S. S. Prawer

'Professor Prawer's book is a landmark in the agonizingly slow beginnings of comparative literature in Britain.' George Steiner in the *Sunday Times*. 'As a human and historical study, *Karl Marx and World Literature* is full of interest . . . . the subject is lucidly treated.' *The Times Educational Supplement.* £2.50
Oxford Paperbacks

Pages from the Goncourt Journal
Edited and translated by Robert Baldick

The literary partnership of Jules and Edmond de Goncourt was remarkable in many ways, but it is the brothers' journal, in which they recorded in minute detail the French literary scene of the nineteenth century, which has assured their immortality. This selection was first published in 1962, and is now available in Oxford Paperbacks. Illustrated £2.95

A Rational Animal
Antony Flew

'In this collection Antony Flew sets himself to resolve the tension between 'rational' and 'animal' and to point up some implications for the human sciences. These essays are seasoned work, full of stout sense.' *The Times Higher Education Supplement.* £5.95

Can You Find Me
Christopher Fry

'Thought this sheep-shearing photo would interest you. Can you find me.' Thus wrote Christopher Fry's mother on a postcard to her sister Ada in July 1906, and gave a title to her son's intimate portrayal of his family. The eminent playwright reveals himself to be a master of family biography too, as with the aid of letters, diaries, and photographs he constructs a gentle, moving story. Illustrated £5.95

The Ordeal of Ivor Gurney
Michael Hurd

Behind the name Ivor Gurney lies the tragic story of a composer and poet whose life seemed full of promise but who ended his days in a mental hospital. In his lively biography of this exceptional man, Michael Hurd examines Gurney's music and poetry, drawing on a wealth of previously unpublished material including his brilliant and amusing letters. Illustrated £5.95

Collected Poems
David Gascoyne

David Gascoyne's *Collected Poems,* first published in 1965, is now reissued – 'an opportunity to see how early promise has been so splendidly fulfilled and a reminder that he is a poet in the same league as Rimbaud and Rilke.' Neville Braybrook in the *Sunday Telegraph.*
Paper covers £2.95

Amen
Yehuda Amichai
Translated by the author and Ted Hughes

Yehuda Amichai is one of the best-known living poets writing in Hebrew. These translations preserve the tone and cadence of his own voice speaking in English: in the words of Ted Hughes, 'they are Yehuda Amichai's own English poems'. Paper covers £2.75

Alexander Pope: Poetical Works
Edited by Herbert Davis
With a new introduction by Pat Rogers

This edition provides an authoritative text suited to both student and general reader: it contains all of Pope's poems, except for his translations from Homer and poems of doubtful attribution. £2.95
Oxford Paperbacks

On Difficulty
and other Essays
George Steiner

The essays in this stimulating new collection are, in the proper sense of the term, 'working papers' – essays which aim to initiate discussion and further work, and which raise questions at the frontier of our understanding of language and society. The book is essential reading for both layman and specialist. £5.50

The Magic World of Orson Welles
James Naremore

Orson Welles's flamboyant career has made him a legendary figure in the history of film. James Naremore looks in detail at his remarkable films from *Citizen Kane* to *F for Fake* and explores the qualities that have made them such a unique and individual statement of one man's rebellious spirit. Illustrated £9.75

André Bazin
Dudley Andrew

Although he never made a film, André Bazin was one of the most influential figures in the film world after the Second World War. One of the few great theorists in the history of film, he was also an activist, setting up film clubs, lecturing, writing, championing unfashionable film-makers, founding and editing *Cahiers du Cinéma*. This is the first full-length biography. Illustrated £7.25

Great Film Directors
A Critical Anthology
Edited by Leo Braudy and Morris Dickstein

The lives and careers of twenty-three of the most important directors in the history of film are discussed in this anthology of some eighty essays by Andrew Sarris, Susan Sontag, James Agee and others. Paper covers £4.50

American Silent Film
William K. Everson

This survey pays due tribute to the acknowledged masters, and fills in many of the gaps in existing film histories, too. It discusses major films and stars, the development of the industry in Hollywood, and the transition to sound films, and contains a chronology of leading events and films. It is the most important book on the subject to be published for forty years. Illustrated £6.95

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MID-AUTUMN BOOKS

Peter Conrad

I Am a Chimera

The Thirties and After by STEPHEN SPENDER
Macmillan/Fontana £7.95 and £1.50
Reading the Thirties by BERNARD BERGONZI
Macmillan £5.95

The ignominious, dishonest decade of the Thirties left its writers, compromised by their political credulity, with life-long guilty consciences. Auden and Isherwood sought absolution in America, in religious conversion, and in a protracted literary revisionism. America was their atonement. Auden sentenced himself to anonymous, penitential membership of the lonely crowd in New York, Isherwood burned away his regrets in the otiose solar bliss of California. The existential Protestantism Auden learned from his friend the theologian Reinhold Niebuhr instructed him to accept his alienation from society and, instead of devising political remedies, to await reclamation by God's grace. The Vedantist mysticism Isherwood learned from his mentor Gerald Heard convinced him to despair of changes in the world outside him, which was in any case metaphysically unreal and impermanent, and to concentrate on engineering changes within himself. Both set about disowning their political past by rewriting their early texts. Auden constructed an orthodox poetic canon from which the mendacious political poems were excluded. Isherwood, instead of confessionally recanting like Auden, shed polluted selves with oriental facility, telling ever more scabrous and shameless truths about his life while Auden was armouring himself inside fictions, fads and ritualised habits.

Stephen Spender, left behind in England, hasn't found it so easy to detach himself from his errors. Religious absolution wasn't possible for him: he remains a devout atheist. Nor was political deconversion. Niebuhr's theology persuaded Auden of the inadequacy of self-supporting liberalism. Man denied God's existence, but was rebuked by the Devil's prompt materialisation in human affairs under the guise of Hitler. Spender, however, shiftily began ameliorating communism into liberalism, only to find himself (when *Encounter*'s moneys were traced back to the CIA) a hired hack of the anti-communists. In the struggle to live with a past which Auden repentantly lived down and Isherwood brazenly exposed, Spender has become a confused, harassed comic character, and this is how, in sad extenuation, he represents himself in *The Thirties and After*.

He has been doubly duped, by his own gullibility and by the infidelity of his friends. Isherwood sadistically admits in *Lions and Shadows* that Spender's charming, puppyish ingenuousness invited treachery and rejection. Now, in *The Thirties and After*, Spender confides that he has always been conscious 'in my deepest friendships . . . of being thus "taken with a pinch of salt".' In restitution, he has decided to outstay or outlive his tormentors. If his friends run off to America, he will remain behind as custodian of the past they've deserted; if they betray him, he will revenge himself by surviving to write their obituaries. The present volume ends with a series of funerary pieces in which the abashed, cast-off Spender at last has the opportunity to defend himself – a memoir rebarbatively recalling Eliot's superciliousness, a hallucinatory vision of the dead MacNeice 'standing at the foot of my bed, looking down at me, with amused contempt in his gaze', a memorial oration pondering Auden's degeneration from the prophet of the Thirties to the crotchety celebrity of the Sixties, wailing in tones of ferocious disdain when at Spender's house he is served boiled ham. That reference to a meal is characteristic, for in the later part of *The Thirties and After*, while his contemporaries are dying, Spender seems mostly engrossed in drinking or dining well – scoffing sea-food in Venice on a cultural junket, swilling vodka and gobbling caviar sandwiches with Stravinsky, tippling cognac with Malraux, or being entertained in mid-Western restaurants after lucrative poetry-readings. This is, of course, the survivor's smuggest prerogative: others are moribund, but he is alive, well and enjoying his food.

Though Spender has managed to outlive most of his generation, he hasn't been able to outlive himself. He has chosen to escape from his past not by suppressing it like Auden and marmorealising into a classic, or by continually revisiting and revising it like Isherwood, but by exhibiting it in all its shame and silliness and throwing himself on the mercy of his judges. Hence the resurrection of the shoddy occasional pieces or propagandist squibs collected in this volume. Their errors and absurdities now constitute, for Spender, their documentary value and his claim to a pardon. He is embarrassed, he says, by many of these essays and journal entries, but that is why he has decided to reprint them. In Isherwood such self-excoriation would be cheeky self-exculpation. His self-love is so secure that it can afford the luxury of doting self-hatred: Isherwood's assaults on his own follies and crimes are like a man's jovial enjoyment of his own body-odour. With Spender the abjectness and inauthenticity are genuine, not affected.

But this ingratiating honesty makes him a much less assured artist than his evasive colleagues. The 'I' of Auden is imperious and authoritarian, the 'I' of Isherwood is cool and clinical, but the 'I' of Spender is blushfully naïve, as spindly and insecure as the man himself: 'I was rather willowy myself and am still outsize', the 'I' says of the teetering body it inhabits. Spender, despite his miserable self-preoccupation, lacks the egotist's confidence. That plaintive 'I', forever standing up and asking to be counted, is trying to earn an identity, but its natural mood is the expression of woeful incapacity: 'I could not dance. I could not speak German.'

The Thirties and After is as embarrassing to read as (on Spender's evidence) it was to write, because that shaky first-person singular is constantly laying claim to opinions which it hasn't the strength to justify. A piece on *Phoenix* from the *Left Review* in 1937 quotes a Lawrentian sermon and chirpily adds, 'I like this.' The fragile self-conceit extends from literary criticism to political judgment. In Spain the same year, Spender ventures with endearing dopiness, 'I like the Spanish people because it seems to me that they are emotionally honester than other people.' That awkward 'it seems to me' gives the game away: Spender lacks the courage to endow an assertion with legislative force; and the subjective admission warns as well that a retraction might be imminent.

Thus his political gestures, intended as radical acts of self-definition, are actually timidly conformist, adhering to the collective identity of an ideological group as a retreat from the tribulation of personal identity. 'My standard in judging him', Spender says of Lawrence, 'is that I am a socialist.' A contribution to the *Daily Worker* is entitled with nervy vainglorious ness 'I Join the Communist Party'. Twenty years later Spender is apologising for now being of the opposite persuasion while defensively contending that no apology is called for: 'The fact that I was anti-communist does not, I think, require apology.' In his anxiety to make himself interesting, Spender fancies that he is mad, and is elated by an expressionist portrait which makes him look a lunatic. But even here a mocking friend disabuses him. E. R. Curtius tells him he doesn't need to be mad. Far from being deranged, in sad truth he is tamely ordinary. Spender's fugitive 'I' is actually most comfortable when it can impersonate someone else. In Spain in 1937 he is flattered to be 'almost invariably mistaken for a member of the [International] Brigade': the supposition healingly joins the pleasure of

Among this week's contributors:

PETER CONRAD is the author of *The Victorian Treasure House* and *Shandyism*.

PAUL FUSSELL's books include *The Rhetorical World of Augustan Humanism, Samuel Johnson and the Life of Writing* and *The Great War and Living Memory*.

KINGSLEY AMIS has recently edited *The Faber Popular Reciter*.

J. G. BALLARD's novels include *Crash, Concrete Island* and *High-Rise*.

HELEN MCNEIL teaches English at the University of East Anglia.

ANTONY POLONSKY is at present working on a history of the Polish government in exile.

DAVID CAUTE's *The Great Fear* was published earlier this year.

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being someone else with the benison of group membership. At an Illinois university in 1965 he is both chuffed and depressed to be mistaken for an embodiment of his poems. 'Are you Mr S?' say the sponsors of his reading, meeting him at the airport. 'We weren't sure we'd recognise you.'

Spender's honesty about himself compels commiseration and a horrified admiration. No such indulgence is deserved by Bernard Bergonzi's *Reading the Thirties,* which manages to be both slight (150 pages, half of which is quotation) and pretentious. The pretention is methodological. Bergonzi has structuralised the Thirties and prattles hieratically of deep structures, codes of discourse, and contexts doubling as texts. Even Garbo, sellingly imprinted on the jacket, is in the text grammatically abstracted into a metonym and economically packaged as that item omnipresent in the shopping-baskets of structuralists, 'a reified commodity'. Auden's style undergoes the same mechanical metamorphosis as Garbo's face, becoming a marketable idiom which Bergonzi (trying hard to be influenced by Goldmann and Barthes, 'however imperfectly apprehended') entitles 'the Audenesque' and treats as a uniform collectively sported by the poets of the decade. This misconception is typical of the book. Auden's style is above all personal, a conjuration of private fantasy; Bergonzi first reduces that style from visionary to syntactic idiosyncracy and then impersonalises it, making it a possession of its period.

Bergonzi's perceptions don't match his methodological promises. His arcane 'deep structure' is excavated by laying quotes end to end. His 'contexts' are thematic rag-bags: most of the chapters merely take inventory of the arterial roads, helmeted airmen, glass towers and frontier guards who recur in the literature of the Thirties. The 'collective text' Bergonzi hopes to synthesise from the disparate texts of the decade is a concentration camp into which writers are hustled after being denuded of their imaginative individuality. Structuralism of this kind is critical Maoism, contemptuous of individual differences. But Bergonzi's own enthusiasms bely his totalitarian method, for he is at times unregenerately subjective in his preferences. The book contains several such acts of recidivism, assertions of a private judgment the structuralists want to exterminate: '*Look Stranger!* . . . I take to be Auden's finest collection', or 'amongst the novels of the Thirties one of those that I most admire . . . is Wyndham Lewis's *The Revenge for Love*'.

Bergonzi can't permit himself to acknowledge differences between the internees of his collective textual prison. A chapter on the cinema corrals into proximity a series of comments on the institution but misses the enlivening differences between writers about the medium. H. G. Wells, for instance, sees the cinema as a form prefiguring the world-state he hoped to create, specialising in global surveillance and aerial omniscience, and therefore as the novel's legitimate successor in which personal intrigues are generalised into cosmic fables. Aldous Huxley regards it as a more sinister technological contrivance, at first a medium whereby America (in *Jesting Pilate*) advertises its imbecility to the rest of humanity, and eventually (in *Ape and Essence*) the only form capable of representing the world's incendiary apocalypse, since it is the product of the same scientific revolution which has destroyed the world. For Graham Greene the cinema is a harmless lie-machine, a cheap parody of religious consolation, 'the nearest' (as he says of a Sacha Guitry film) 'to a Utopia that poor mankind is ever likely to get'. Isherwood during the conspiratorial Thirties sees the cinema as a mode of espionage and subversion. 'I am a camera' is the spy's bland incognito. Bergmann in *Prater Violet* praises the film as an unpausing, unsparing 'infernal machine' which once set in motion regrets nothing, explains nothing, but 'simply ripens to its inevitable explosion', like the terrorist's time-bomb. After his decampment to America and oriental religion, Isherwood's cinema changes to a mode of mystical two-dimensionality, a contemplative discipline. Isherwood was haunted by Flaherty's description of the cinema as 'the longest distance between two points', which makes it a meditative exercise in self-repetition. Auden, though he worked alongside the GPO Film Unit in 1935, became increasingly estranged from the cinema, and later condemned the camera as a machine which reduces emotions to anatomical data and creates sorrow by preserving a past we ought to be at liberty to forget.

Discriminations like this ought to be the energy of criticism, but Bergonzi's adoptive structuralism has required him to forswear them. He ought to read Spender's book, to see how foolish ideologies of interpretation can make critics look.

Paul Fussell

War's Embers

The Ordeal of Ivor Gurney by MICHAEL HURD
Oxford £5.95

'They are getting at me through wireless.' Not from *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold* but from this first biography of the World War I poet and composer who died in 1937 after 15 years in an asylum. Waugh's paranoid schizophrenia ended, we are assured, in a cure. Because he was a drunk, a pill-popper, a fatty, and a satirist, we think his affliction funny, and some say he had it coming to him. Gurney's case is different but not all that different; and Michael Hurd, who has worked diligently through the whole Gurney archive, tells his sad story with just enough acid to gratify the weary.

Gurney's education in Gloucester was musical and poetic. He went to King's School, which supplied choristers to the cathedral, and read privately with a gentle paedophile curate. At 14 he was composing for piano and violin, ambitious to succeed as a professional like Vaughan Williams. As a boy he was outspoken, solitary, awkward and sloppy. To his schoolmates he was already 'Batty' Gurney. Later, his RSM explained to a colonel appalled at Gurney's turn-out: 'Quite a good man, sir, but he's a musician, and doesn't seem to be able to get himself clean.' He was locally renowned for eccentric long-distance walks and sleepings-out, and for eating nothing for days and then gorging on half-pounds of butter and piles of cakes. The needs of his body embarrassed him: regular meals were his aversion, he was proud of his resort to nightly enemas, and early and late he seems to have repressed his sexuality entirely. At the Royal College of Music, which he entered at the age of 21, he was a headstrong, impractical student, by now nicknamed 'Schubert'. He thought of himself as 'an undigested clod', but his violin sonatas showed promise, and so did his settings of Elizabethan lyrics and poems by Henley, Housman, and Bridges. Well before the war he was suffering from fits of suicidal depression and what Hurd calls 'a marked emotional and physical instability', which troubled his friends. Just before the war he had a breakdown and returned to his beloved Severn -- always magic to him -- for therapeutic sailing expeditions in his tiny boat *Dorothy*.

Gurney's lunacy was a gift to between-the-wars pacifism. It has usually been understood that he is pre-eminently a monitory victim of the trenches, a sound mind done in by the horrors of the line. Hurd shows convincingly that this is not true. As he finds, 'illness would have declared itself, war or no war'. Actually, life in the trenches as a Private with the 2/5 Gloucesters did Gurney no end of good. He testifies frequently that the external distraction and fear in the line are wonderfully efficacious against his pre-war aesthete's 'neurasthenia'. What he means is that worrying with good cause is healthier than worrying without. 'My mind is becoming saner', he notices, 'and more engaged with outside things.'

In the trenches he wrote better music than in London because he had no access to a piano, and the poems he sent back were now good enough to persuade Sidgwick & Jackson to bring them out in 1917 as a 'war poet's' volume entitled *Severn and Somme*. Even a bullet-wound in the arm, not quite a blighty but good enough for six weeks back in Rouen, left him cheerful. In September 1917, though, he was gassed at Passchendaele and was adjudged to be suffering from shell shock as well. He recovered at a hospital in Scotland, where he fell for a nurse, platonically. He was happy to be alive and proud to be known as one of the war poets.

He snapped in March 1918. His letters turned suicidal. After some months in a military asylum, he was discharged as cured and returned to Gloucester and vaguely to the Royal College, where he resumed his pre-war eccentricities. His second volume of poems, *War's Embers* (1919), was much better than his first, although he played now, as Hurd says, the Super-Tramp, wandering the countryside from one friend's house to another and rapidly losing jobs as clerk and cinema pianist. He was now as impossible as before the war, and in addition was hearing voices and holding a pillow to his head to block the electric emissions aimed at him by nearby wireless sets. In 1922, after demanding a revolver at the Gloucester police station and then trying to gas himself, he was committed by his family

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and friends. He remained behind bars at the City of London Mental Hospital, Dartford, Kent, until he died of tuberculosis 15 years later. He registered his sufferings there in thousands of lines like these:

> . . . there is dreadful Hell within me
> And nothing helps. Forced meals there have
> been and electricity
> And weakening of sanity by influence
> That's dreadful to endure. And there are orders
> And I am praying for death, death, death,
> And dreadful is the indrawing or
> out-breathing of breath . . .

'The madman', says Chesterton, 'is not the man who has lost his reason. The madman is the man who has lost everything but his reason.' One of Gurney's symptoms was an intense belief in a rational and just universe specialising in strictly logical compensation, where sacrifice is requited by 'payment' and suffering recompensed by happiness. A constant theme in the Dartford poems is that England, whom he has served both as composer and war poet, has neglected to offer him 'pay for Levantie'. This is also the theme of the letters of appeal and grievance he wrote to strangers (some in the US), church dignitaries, and the London Metropolitan Police, who, in his mad reason, he imagined were interested in the long Wordsworthian couplet-poems and plaintive letters he addressed to them. In one of these, Gurney suggests that even the unreason of the body can be tamed by scrupulous rational observances:

> For 28 days I touched meat or bread only once, and little at that. Many people knew the truth and should have admired so good a life . . . I drank much, not really too much, smoked much, ate as little as possible. Did gymnastics, digging, used an enema, washed my body every morning.

After all this, and the poems and songs as well, 'Is there not honour of war poet at rebirth, or in Heaven?'

One of the heroines of Hurd's biography of this annoying, pitiable man is Miss Marion Scott, who saw that his poems and music were published while he was in France and who visited him constantly at Dartford. Another is Helen Thomas, Edward's widow, who visited him during 1932. He told her, 'It was wireless that killed Edward.' Once she brought Edward's

> own well-used ordnance maps of Gloucester where he had often walked . . . Gurney at once spread them out on his bed and he and I spent the whole time I was there tracing with our fingers the lanes and byeways and villages of which he knew every step . . . It was most deeply moving.

Less attractive is Gurney's brother Ronald, who was always annoyed by Ivor's artistic pretensions and his classy London friends and who begrudged publication of his brother's work until 1959, when he capitulated and lodged the manuscripts in the Gloucester Public Library. Around 300 of the 900 poems have been published and 82 of the 265 songs, constituting settings of poems by Hardy, Bridges, Yeats, Graves and Edward Thomas. It must be said that the text of the poems is in a terrible state. There have been two amateur editions, one in 1954, one in 1973. There needs to be a good one, which will at least avoid such absurdities as the 'Index of First Lines' of the 1973 Chatto & Windus edition: here the first lines are madly arranged not alphabetically but in order of pagination. Hurd's readings from Gurney's manuscripts often differ from the published texts, and he

The Last Chronicles of Ballyfungus

Mary Manning

In this novel Mary Manning lovingly chronicles the foibles and escapades of the extraordinary inhabitants of the market town of Ballyfungus. 'One leaves all that merry company with regret. Regret also that this is the last chronicle. I do hope Miss Manning will go on to a first chronicle; and after that as many as possible. Of wit and wisdom and a dancing sense of comedy we can never have enough. More please.' — John Broderick, *Irish Times*.
0 7100 8922 8 £4.50

Lead Us into Temptation

Breandan O hEithir

This translation of O hEithir's award-winning Irish novel *Lig Sinn i gCathu* will introduce English readers to a writer who is being hailed as one of the most original talents to have appeared on the Irish literary scene for many years. Brendan Kennelly writes in the *Irish Times*: 'I found it a pleasure to read and meditate on a book that is at once so fierce and tender, so coarse and compassionate, so funny and sad. It is a fine achievement by a gifted writer.' In the *Guardian* Robert Nye finds it 'a very original novel, and I think a good one . . . it signifies the debut of a writer of talent'. 0 7100 0030 8 £4.50

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Set against the contrasting background of revolutionary Russia this novel takes the reader on a Trans-Siberian Railway train crowded with refugees fleeing from the Bolshevik terror into pre-revolutionary China. It is based on personal experience of Shanghai and Manchuria. 0 7100 0023 5 £4.95

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Jeff Nuttall

Born in Wigan in 1901 and a childhood friend of George Formby, who was later to become his greatest rival, Frank Randle was one of the greatest music hall comedians of all time. Jeff Nuttall's portrait of 'a very, very funny man' and his search to piece that portrait together, is a beautifully recorded analysis of the ways in which working class values are expressed in popular entertainment and thus ritualised by it.
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Edited By Geoffrey Parker and Lesley M. Smith

Contributors: Niels Steensgaard, Geoffrey Parker, Ivo Schöffer, John Elliot, A. Lloyd Moote, Ruggiero Romano, John A. Eddy

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R. H. Tawney

Edited with an Introduction by J. M. Winter

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Zen Culture

Thomas Hoover

In recent years the West has been increasingly influenced by the Eastern ways of thought known as Zen. This study explains how Zen developed in Japan, what role it played in Japanese history, and why hundreds of years later it has touched a nerve in the West.
Illustrated 0 7100 8940 6 *paperback* £3.75

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A Platform to stand on.

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Remember, little more than a decade ago, when many people doubted there was oil beneath the North Sea? But then the huge drilling rigs began probing thousands of feet beneath the seabed and the even more massive production platforms began to appear. And today, the first chapter of the North Sea oil story is ending happily with self-sufficiency in sight and a problem for Britain which many other nations would love to have: how to spend wisely the hundreds of millions of pounds received each year from the growing revenues of taxes and royalties.

Nobody pretends that the oil won't run out eventually. It's no 'cure all' and no windfall. But this much is clear: Chapter one in the North Sea has been a success, with eleven fields in the U.K. sector already producing more than half the nation's requirements. Chapter two, the effort to increase and prolong supplies through new discoveries and the development of economically marginal fields, can be successful too.

But it will require the resources and efforts of the private oil companies, with encouragement from the government.

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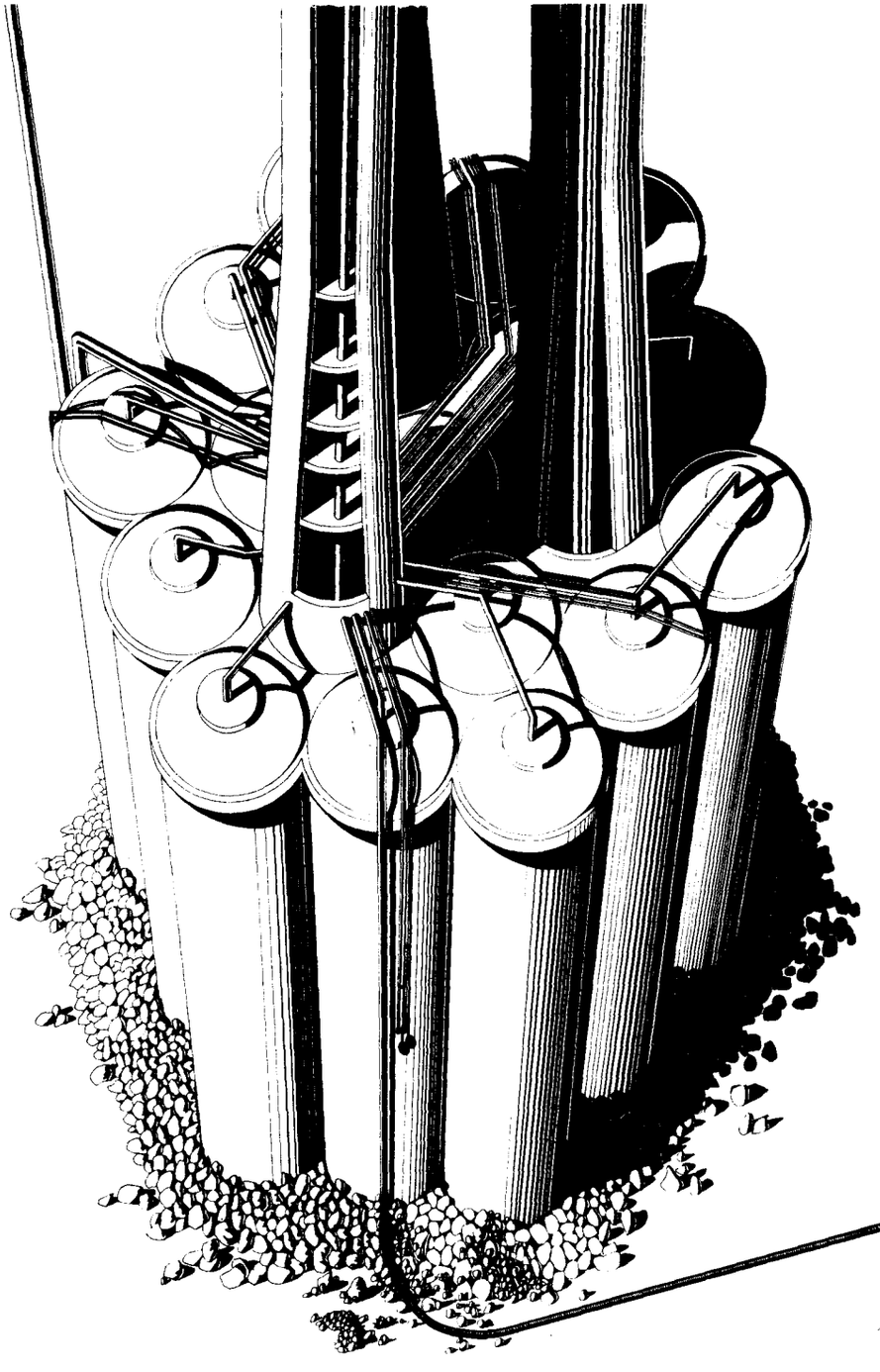
Technology

Drilling and production techniques used in many parts of the world were brought to the North Sea but they were sometimes inadequate to cope with the great depths of water and the ferocity of the weather. New ideas were then tried out as oil men pushed back the frontiers of known technology.

Skills

Behind the drilling rigs and giant producing platforms lay human prowess in everything from geophysics and geology to deep sea diving — jobs that the oil industry was in a unique position to fill with highly experienced specialists, and which British people are filling in growing numbers.



Risk-Taking

Much of the cash that must be spent is 'risk money': funds advanced in the hope — sometimes a slim one — that petroleum will be found. At today's prices, North Sea 'wildcats' — exploration wells — cost £3-4 million each. Yet only one in 20 has so far found enough oil to justify production.

Investment

Even greater outlays of capital are essential to producing oil and gas. The companies' capital expenditures in developing production will exceed £7,000 million over the years 1972 to 1978. And even this does not include the vast sums expended in discovery and appraisal costs before development began.

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may be the man to edit the poems properly.

But I'm not sure about that. Despite Hurd's compassionate understanding of Gurney and his skill in analysing his music, this book is disappointing whenever it deals with Gurney's poems. Hurd's literary theory is insufficiently sophisticated for his purposes. Although he knows that pieces of music have models and use received styles and a technique calling for close analysis, for him literature seems simply to photograph an actuality irresistibly and completely there rather than infusing it with form and thus half-creating it. Gurney's odd, wrenched idiom does derive in part from his disturbed state of mind, but it also derives from Whitman and Hopkins and is received in turn by Dylan Thomas and Lincoln Kirstein.

One of the treasures Hurd has exhumed is an unpublished Dartford poem whose second half is incoherent but whose first half indicates that in his madness Gurney was gifted with moments of uncanny prescience:

Time to Come

They will walk there, the sons of our great
grandsons and
Will know no reason for the old love of the land.
There will be no tiny bent-browed houses in the
Twilight to watch, nor small shops of
multi-miscellany.
The respectable and red-brick will rule all,
With green paint railings outside the
front door wall,
And children will not play skip-games in
the gutter,
Nor dust fly furious in hot valour of footer;
Queerness and untidiness will be
smoothed out
As any steam-roller tactful, and there'll
be no doubt
About the dust bins or the colour or curtains,
No talking at the doors,no ten
o'clock flirtings . . .

'Dust fly furious in hot valour of footer' seems to me alone worth the price of Michael Hurd's amiable book.

Kingsley Amis

Beer and Beowulf

The Inklings by HUMPHREY CARPENTER
George Allen & Unwin £6.50

The Inklings were something between a group of friends and an informal club, more friends than club because you were taken there and with luck encouraged to come again, not elected or anything like that. 'There' was a room in Magdalen, Oxford (Thursday evenings in term) and a pub in St Giles (Tuesdays, lunchtime). You read your latest poem or piece of novel aloud and it was commented on, not always favourably. Journalism, the Church, *Hamlet*, 'progress', the connection or lack of one between cremation and disbelief in the resurrection of the body, myths and pacifism might be discussed. If so, they were *discussed*: gossip, anecdote and reminiscence had no place. The tone was serious, facetious, jovial, doctrinal, sceptical and masculine; it had to be that because women never got anywhere near. No, it was their alleged incapacity for discussion, nothing more.

C. S. ('Jack') Lewis, whose room in Magdalen it was, seems to have been *primus inter pares*, though he would probably have disagreed, and put you right on the meaning of the phrase while he was at it. Humphrey Carpenter's book opens with an account of that great, absurd man's earlier life: Ulster childhood, bad time at Malvern, tuition from the kind of atheist who wore his best suit to dig the garden on Sundays, wounded in the trenches in 1918, three Oxford Firsts, the Fellowship in 1925 aged 26. One of his first pupils was John Betjeman, who didn't go to Lewis's 'Beer and Beowulf' evenings and ingeniously got out of reading an Anglo-Saxon text on the grounds that he might have been developing measles and was therefore forbidden to read anything. Not long afterwards he was sent down.

In 1926 Lewis met J. R. R. ('Tollers') Tolkien, 'a smooth, pale, fluent little chap' who wasn't really happy with any English literature after Chaucer but was very happy indeed with stuff like *Pearl* and the Old Icelandic *Völsungasaga*. He tried to spread this happiness among undergraduates by insisting on the literary merits, as well as the philological significance, of such early texts, and made thousands of young men groan. Philip Larkin spoke for a generation when he said he didn't mind, or so much mind, having to know about sound-shifts and strong and weak verbs; what got him down was being expected to *admire* the rubbish. You hated Tolkien because you had to attend his classes – there was a supposed rule whereby he must sooner or later deal with every passage of linguistic or literary 'interest' that would eventually appear as a 'gobbet' in the exam paper – and then found yourself listening to a man whose voice, never clear at the best of times, thickened into unintelligibility as he approached uttering the horrible word to which that part of his discourse was devoted. He was the worst lecturer I have ever known.

Lewis was the best. In saying that his lectures were well attended because he 'handed out information', Mr Carpenter is unintentionally less than fair. There were indeed facts, often selected with an eye to their oddity, but Lewis dealt in understanding, not erudition. I owe to him all the sympathy I have ever been able to feel for Spenser, and he transformed, or rather created, my view of the way the Elizabethans used language (and it *wasn't* a swaggering, swashbuckling way). A Lewis lecture was a feast; if ever a man instructed by delighting it was he. He had splendid gifts of enthusiasm. Unfortunately he would apply them not only to various contemptible Middle English texts but also to the works of Tolkien and Charles Williams.

Great chunks of *The Lord of the Rings* were read out to the Inklings, who by 1945 included or had included more or less regularly R. E. ('Humphrey') Havard, Hugo Dyson (who didn't like *The Lord*), Nevill Coghill, Williams, John Wain and, most regularly of all, W. H. ('Warnie') Lewis, Jack's beloved elder brother. I can understand the appeal of Tolkien's nerveless, cluttered, donnish tale to the Inklings' worse side; it certainly delivered a constant supply of springboards for their discussions; only its popular success still surprises me. How Williams, who had been evacuated to Oxford in 1939 with the rest of the London staff of the OUP, imposed himself is a mystery. I thought I had forgotten all about his Taliessin poems, which I tried so hard to get the measure of just after the war, till I saw them mentioned here. Then their affectation, their imposed difficulty and singularity came swimming back, or rather stood revealed by the passage of time. I was delighted to learn that Tolkien found Williams's work 'sometimes very distasteful, occasionally ridiculous'.

Lewis was the star of the show, a masterly teacher and a critic whose knowledge and feeling were in unusual accord: *The Allegory of Love* is one of the finest of all books about a departed literary era. For many people there was something embarrassing in the unabashed readiness with which his religious polemics took on the largest questions; his convictions come out better in his three delightful *Perelandra* science-fiction novels. He was a very nice man, eager, genial and tolerant – he must have been tolerant to put up with Williams, portrayed here as a pompous buffoon, behaving to the other Inklings as if he were doing them a favour by turning up.

Mr Carpenter's account of Williams, beginning with a short memoir of his London days, is a triumph of skill and tact. Indeed, this could be said of the whole book, in which there is not one dull or slack sentence. He fuses his sources together off-stage, so to speak, and provides a smooth narrative unencumbered either with footnotes or with those horrid little numbers that refer you to a later page. The result is oddly vivid, as if the author must have known at first hand what he described. But he was only three in 1949, when the Inklings were suddenly no more. Their era too had departed.

This English

I apologise to all Government Health Departments, maligned by this column on 6 October: there are, of course, several Government Health Departments, and I'm sure they were unanimous in their announcement that cigarettes are bad for you. This week? New light on the football transfer-market (and a bad 'bereft': it doesn't mean 'without'); two nobs' pronouns (I can understand *her* using it – but why him?); and a misplaced apposition (*Guinness Book of Records*, please note).

☐ Villa . . . adopted a defensive game, which involved a lot of back peddling, but they were not completely bereft of aggressive intent . . . **Tom Freeman** *The Times* (R. G. A. Youard)

☐ The only thing which makes you and I individuals is our brains. **Barbara Cartland** *Evening Standard* (A. B. Horwell).

☐ To readers of the *Listener*, whom I always fondly imagine are 'media freaks' to a man, this may come as a surprise. **Wilfred De'Ath** *Listener* (J. Kirkman).

☐ Nicole's books are long – about 125,000 words – and when things are going well he turns out about 12,000 of them a day. **Victor E. Neuberg** *British Book News* (Gavan Vesey)

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Roger Woddis

Jane's Thing

Make It Happy by JANE COUSINS *Virago* £2.95

Since Freud first tried to analyse
The driving force between our thighs,
A hump of mercenary hacks
Has tried to follow in his tracks,
And often scored by cashing in
On what some still regard as sin.
They frequently made nervous wrecks
Of those who were ashamed of sex,
While others, seething with disgust,
Deplored this marketing of lust;
But what sells more than loving hearts
Are public shows of private parts.

Jane Cousins, on the other hand,
Avoids both porn and wonderland
By laying bare with healing knife
The not-so-simple facts of life.
In *Make It Happy* she succeeds
In dealing with our basic needs,
Dispelling in a friendly style,
Neither aloof nor infantile,
The myths that circulate among
The media-maddened teenage young.

'Can I get pregnant from a kiss?'
'Will loo-seats give me syphilis?'
Such questions that our children pose
Are answered in pellucid prose.
When she employs a doctor's term,
Like vulva, testicles or sperm,
The author adds a *c'est-à-dire*
To make her meaning crystal-clear,
Aware that children in a gang
Use Latin rather less than slang.
She comes right out with cocks and tits
And pictures of the naughty bits,
And thus by treating them as mates
She reassures and educates.

You may object (as some have done)
That treating intercourse as fun –
'The fruit of that forbidden tree' –
May undermine the family
And propagate the false belief
That sex is there to bring relief.
'For shame!' these angry critics cry,
'This book can only tumefy!' –
Equating with a moral stance
The blessed state of ignorance.
Well, what of love? Well, what of it?
Jane Cousins knows how infinite
Is love's eternal parallel;
What lovers feel no one can tell,
And the conjunction of the mind
Cannot be easily defined.
Her text is simple: girls and boys
Should know what each of them enjoys.

The only fault I have to pick
Is in a quoted limerick
Referring to a youth named Hank
Who liked to masturbate (or wank).
The last line doesn't scan or sing –
Oh, well, you can't have everything.

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J. G. Ballard

Manbotching

The Body in Question by JONATHAN MILLER
Cape £7.95

Are books becoming another form of television? By rights, this lavishly illustrated survey of human physiology, 'linked', as the publishers say, to the new 13-part BBC series, should be reviewed by the NS television critic. Like Desmond Morris's recent *Manwatching*, another interesting example of the transformation of the book into its electronic paradigm, *The Body in Question* seems designed not to be read so much as to serve as a reminder of happier hours spent in front of the tube.

Here are the familiar huge illustrations, many of them reassuringly the size of a television screen, the TV-style graphics, the sudden zooms on to any slightly affecting image – the constant favourite of these books is the suckling infant. The disconnected flow of images, from a full-colour reproduction of Verrocchio's *Baptism of Christ* to a news-agency photograph of a music-hall faith-healer, makes complete sense to a viewer trained to appreciate the presentation techniques of *Civilisation* and *World in Action*, and further creates the uncanny impression that one is not really reading a book but watching a programme. Recently, while being shown round an imposingly furnished lounge in one of the smarter Thames Valley housing estates, I actually heard the hostess apologise for 'the books', a row of a dozen old book-club titles occupying a lowly cell in her wall-unit. I knew what she meant. They were rather scruffy and undisciplined, totally lacking the authentic manufactured look. But she can throw them out now; *The Body in Question*, like *Manwatching*, will fit in perfectly among the stainless-steel knick-knacks, the inlaid executive bar and the 26-inch TV screen.

All this sounds like envy, and probably is – I'm only too keen for the BBC to take my own 13-part series on the social history of the car-park. But having myself read medicine for a couple of years, which gives me about the same level of medical expertise as the average viewer with 100 *Horizons* stored away in the back of his head, I found *The Body in Question* oddly flat and unoriginal. At its best Desmond Morris's imagination can throw up a genuinely bizarre idea – the subliminal confusion of breasts and buttocks, for example – and *The Naked Ape* and *Manwatching* even hint at a new kind of novel. In *The Body in Question*, however, Jonathan Miller has carefully side-stepped any temptation to be speculative. He seems to have set out to explore the way in which the vital functions of the human body – respiration, the circulation, its response to illness – become a series of 'metaphors' through which we, often misleadingly, view our entire universe; but in fact this series of TV lectures soon becomes an easily digestible mix of popular medical history, A-level biology and dissecting-room anecdotes. The author was one of the last people to be described as 'brilliant' before the term went out of use in the mid-Sixties, but I found not a single arresting or original idea in the entire volume. Take its opening sentence, typical of the book as a whole: 'Of all the objects in the world, the human body has a peculiar status: it is not only possessed by the person who has it, it also possesses and constitutes him.' Is that an original insight, or the smooth packaging of the banal?

A remarkable omission from this illustrated account of our vital functions is any reference to sex and reproduction. But perhaps the BBC have leased the franchise on these topics to another 13-parter, and at this very moment Alex Comfort is interviewing himself outside a massage parlour in Bradford. It may be that we have all had a surfeit in recent years of revelations about the functions of our bodies and that the subject needs to gather a little mystery again (or, more worryingly, is sex itself losing its charms – I keep thinking about those 500,000 women who have gone off the pill; is it in fact sex that they have given up?).

To a large extent the deficiencies of this book lie within the particular private jargon which Dr Miller displays so engagingly on TV, and which so brilliantly mimics originality without ever actually revealing it. 'Metaphor', for example, is a particularly potent term for him – 'Like blood, metaphors circulate through the intellectual community', he says in the chapter on the circulation. One of the vague fears of anyone who has ever been wheeled into an operating theatre is that the surgeon hidden behind his mask and gown will turn out, after the operation, to have been one of those likeable imposters, usually an out-of-work actor or would-be writer, who seem so effortlessly to masquerade as senior members of the medical profession. Reading this book, and watching Dr Miller on television, I sometimes have the impression that he is reversing the process – a genuinely qualified physician who has left his hospital rounds and feels compelled to play the roles of actor, satirist, theatrical producer, TV presenter, author. But which body in question wrote *The Body in Question*?

David Caute

Only Direct

The Theatre of Erwin Piscator: Half a Century of Politics in the Theatre by JOHN WILLETT
Eyre Methuen £9.95

Theatre directors, of course, present a particular problem to their biographers. Whereas writing, music, painting and film are media whose physical properties yield a permanent record of an artist's work, the genius of a stage director, like that of his actors, is dissolved into memory as soon as the curtain descends. To bring to life a corpus of work that one has not seen and cannot pluck out of the archives requires not only patient and sensitive excavations among the peripheral evidence (set designs, technology, memoirs, box office receipts, manifestos) but also notable powers of empathy. Fortunately John Willett lacks none of these attributes. Clearly our most distinguished authority on the interplay of art and politics in 20th-century Europe, he has now written a definitive study of Erwin Piscator, the German director whom many of us first heard about when reading Brecht.

In the 1920s Piscator, according to Reich,

> [was] a young-looking man with strongly phosphorescent blue-green eyes . . .normally in a good mood and at the top of his form. He was like one of those toy figures you can't knock over: accepting defeats and setbacks with defiance, and ready for a return match at any moment.

Even so, as Mr Willett makes plain in his descriptions of Piscator's long years of exile from Nazi Germany, and of the spiritual and professional exile he suffered after the war in the Federal Republic, it was to be Piscator's fate to suffer almost perpetual neglect.

Brecht developed an enormous admiration for Piscator's work: relentlessly political, episodic – epic. Willett points out that if one adds up the references to Piscator in Brecht's collected writings they are noticeably exceeded only by those to Shakespeare. Brecht, who was five years the younger man, saw Piscator as a new kind of de facto dramatist, 'inspiring scenes and projects by other writers, supplying them with documents and scenic performances, and making a montage of them'. Probably unaware of this evidence of personal admiration in Brecht's then largely unpublished notes, an embittered, slightly jealous Piscator noted after the war: 'When I read Brecht's notes for his plays, I notice that the examples chosen by him correspond much more to the plays directed by me than to those authored by him.'

Brecht was a magpie who delighted in feasts of largely eclectic borrowing verging on

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blatant plagiarism. When one reads Piscator's description of his own method, written in the 1920s, one comes face to face with the scale of Brecht's debt to him:

> In lieu of private themes we had generalisations, in lieu of what was special the typical, in lieu of accident casualty. Decorativeness gave way to constructiveness, Reason was put on a par with Emotion, while sensuality was replaced by didacticism and fantasy by documentary reality.

Graduate students may revel in this but playwrights may wonder. Piscator's 'dramaturgical collective' habitually rode roughshod over the texts and feelings of authors (a form of mayhem which Brecht also enjoyed, so long as they weren't his texts or his feelings – there is no ignoring the fact that Piscator never directed a play written by Brecht in Brecht's lifetime). Little though he had in common with Brook or Grotowski, Piscator did share their commitment to Director's Theatre, to the downgrading of the text, to the revolt against the 19th-century deification of the author.

The technological resources of the German theatre had become spectacular, but despite several collapses and bankruptcies Piscator persisted in scorning elementary economics. The scaffolding for *Hoppla* stood 26 feet high and weighed four tons, while each half of the hemisphere designed for *Rasputin* measured 50 feet across and weighed a ton. To replace the one set by the other consumed 100 man-hours. To finance his gargantuan visions of the class war, Piscator dipped his hand deep into the pockets of capitalist backers and set up his theatre in the West End of Berlin, where he was mainly patronised by a smart, middle-class, novelty-seeking audience. In view of this, Mr Willett is scarcely being uncharitable when he asks how this extravagance, not to mention the ultra-modern flat designed by Gropius in which Piscator's elegant wife was photographed by a woman's magazine, can be squared with all the talk of a 'revolutionary theatre', 'class consciousness', and 'proletarian communist art'. Mr Willett suspects that Brecht's satirical poem, 'Der Theaterkommunist', was pointed at Piscator; certainly Piscator thought it was. But then Brecht himself wasn't averse to a few material luxuries.

The post-war years, during which Brecht's Berliner Ensemble was achieving international fame, were sad and frustrating ones for Piscator. The drama fashionable at that time, Anouilh, Giraudoux, Fry and Eliot, like that of Beckett and Ionesco, was utterly alien and uncongenial to him. Like Lukács, whose aesthetics were otherwise antagonistic to the Brecht-Piscator concept of theatre, Piscator found a card in his marxist index to damn such playwrights as decadent, reactionary, retrograde.

Piscator could have settled in East Germany but was not quite sure: his reservations, according to Mr Willett, seem to have had more to do with personal rivalries than with political fastidiousness. He was, however, invited to do a production in East Berlin in 1957; election to the (East) German Academy of Arts followed. Piscator in fact had remained remarkably faithful to his marxism despite the years he spent in the Soviet Union and his knowledge of what had happened to German comrades in Stalin's purges. Mr Willett's section on the fate of the communist *émigrés* makes painful reading, culminating as it does in the thought that 'on a

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ANDRE DEUTSCH

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purely actuarial basis' it was safer for a German communist intellectual to live under Hitler than under Stalin.

Sadly, marxist artists are not by inclination very generous about one another: comrade rivals are more rival than comrade. Piscator, disparaged Meyerhold; Meyerhold returned the compliment, deriding the German's aspiration to create a revolutionary theatre in a hurry. Not least of the merits of this penetrating study is the precision with which it threads its way among the noisy clans of the literary Left, almost always sympathetic in tone but taking nothing for granted. Mr Willett's grasp of both politics and aesthetics must surely obligate him one day to confront head on that vast question-mark which shines so bright that we can only blink at it obliquely – whether, in fact, any work of art is as capable of awakening a socialist as is a simple list of genuine grievances and practical demands handed to a worker outside his factory gate.

Helen McNeil

The Cry of Recognition

The Tell-Tale Heart by JULIAN SYMONS *Faber* £6.95

For much of his adult life, Edgar Allan Poe longed for the innocent pleasures of hackdom. To sit down at one's desk sober every morning and write something printable, for which payment is guaranteed, to compel the admiration of one's rivals and inferiors, to be known as a successful writer, especially by women, and then at the end of the day to return to the embrace of a loving, grateful and ignorant family, sinking finally to dreamless sleep in a chaste bed – this was Poe's persistent and pathetic daydream.

Poe failed to realise his waking fantasy of the happy hack. But he didn't fail for want of application. Beginning as a poet who got his foster father and schoolmates to finance his books, he moved on to reviews, cultural notes and quotes, tales and a novel of sorts, returning to the formula gothic tale and the short review, boot-licking or back-biting, depending on where the favours were. Poe achieved his fame with an absolute minimum of plot types. At a generous guess he had three: the self-fulfilling prophecy (*Ligeia*, *The Fall of the House of Usher*); the quest which is also a flight (*The Masque of the Red Death*); and the free play of a puzzle-solving logic (*The Gold Bug*, *The Purloined Letter*). By combining these elements in *The Mystery of Marie Roget* and *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, Poe invented the detective story, whose rational explanations cast a retroactive order on the bizarre and illogical events of the rest of the story.

Poe's tales may have plenty of shocks, but the shocks were well-judged – he sold everything he wrote. He was a literary celebrity from the age of 20 when his sub-Shelleyan *Al Aaraaf* was published in Baltimore, a useful reminder of the benefits a provincial beginning can confer upon an infant talent. From the mid-1830s, Poe was a sought-after magazine editor who wanted to found his own ideal magazine of 'literature proper' if he could get it financed. Poe's works were read in England, where he had received part of his education, and later in France, where Baudelaire breathed life into the charnel-house of Romantic images he inherited from his American 'brother'. By 1843 Poe was set to meet President Tyler (whose son liked his works) and be eased into a comfortable sinecure, which would leave him free to write what he liked.

But by then it was too late. As Julian Symons says, 'everything of decisive emotional importance' in Poe's life was over by 1836, when he was 27. Orphaned before the age of three when his actress mother died of tuberculosis, reared by the sadistic John Allan and his sickly, sentimental wife, Poe fulfilled Allan's expectations by growing up to be a liar, gambler, drunkard and laudanum addict, with the feisty pride of the self-proclaimed Southern military man. Seeking the lost mother in a series of unattainable or tubercular women, Poe settled for a simulacrum of family life with 'Muddy', his good-hearted aunt, and 'Sis', his tubercular cousin Virginia Clemm, who became his child bride in 1836. Poe's marriage seems to have served both his deprived child's wish for something all his own and his impulse to repeat his childhood pattern of suffering and loss. Yet sex doesn't seem to have entered into it: nympholepsy was one of the few perversions Poe failed to go in for.

Once he had provided himself with dependants he depended on, Poe spent the rest of his life struggling and failing to support them by his writing. Stronger men like Dickens and Balzac thrived on the threat of the deadline or the bailiff, but Poe cracked. Every time his talent began to make his life stable and solvent, Poe wrecked it with one of his 'fugues', alcoholic bouts lasting for days. He never met the President, as arranged, because he was in an alcoholic stupor at the time.

Faced with Poe's self-destruction and a history of vindictive and sensational biographies, Symons has decided to separate the wretched drunkard from the tales, poems, and criticism he wrote. The Life is Part One, the Work is Part Two. With Poe – who felt that admitting he didn't 'have any knowledge of the world but from his own breast' would encourage readers to buy his first volume of poems, and who later told readers of his *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque* that their 'terror is not of Germany but of the soul' – the separation of life and art involves risk. Symons's effort to de-psychologise one of literature's great neurotics leaves a dingy, single-track life – 'Alastor' as rewritten by Arnold Bennett. The critical biography's tendency to leap from laundry-lists to lyrics is, as Symons notes, unsatisfactory, unless like George Painter, Richard Ellmann or Walter Jackson Bate the biographer is interested in both (and even then the writers do tend to come out looking rather too bourgeois). The further away the literature gets, the more the life seems worthy only of condescension. 'One can feel much sympathy for him', but that is about all Symons and the reader feel.

Symons exquisitely conveys the competitive mediocrity of 19th-century American literary journalism, and this is his real interest: the crossing-over of journalism into literature. On America he is less certain, making transcendental Emerson 'a poet of everyday life' (in 'The Sphinx'? 'Uriel'? 'The World-Soul'?), and turning New England-hating James Fenimore Cooper into someone called Fenimore Cooper, who wrote 'with a dash of native Puritanism'.

In his chapter on Poe as critic, Symons validates Poe's claim to have been the first

Penelope Gilliatt
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serious American literary critic. Much of Poe's criticism was time-serving, peevish, with the plagiariser's nervous harping on other people's plagiarisms; but Symons shows how in the midst of this Poe was able to set form above literary nationalism, and to stick to his principles. Poe loved to use English literature as a stick for beating Yankee pretentions, but this was because his standard was excellence wherever it was found. When other critics neglected Nathanael Hawthorne's *Twice-Told Tales*, Poe found Hawthorne had 'the purest style, the finest taste . . . the most radiant imagination, the most consummate ingenuity' – even if he couldn't resist adding that one tale must have been cribbed from his own *William Wilson*.

Symons's adhesion to the surface is less productive when it comes to the tales and poems. The 19th-century critics whom he cites as precedents for his avowedly literal readings may have liked Poe without fussing over symbolism, but the same critics using the same criteria forgot about Melville. Of course, there is a lot of surface in Poe. As Symons points out, the tales were written for money, and their style and narrative were meant to please, as they did.

In 'Hop-Frog', one of Poe's most sadistic tales, a king and his seven counsellors are burnt to 'a fetid, blackened, hideous, and indistinguishable mass' by the jester whom they have humiliated. The tale, as Symons says, may be a parable of the persecuted artist turning on his patrons, 'but the first and best reading is the most literal. It is also the reading that gives the story its most terrifying force'. But can there be a wholly literal story about burning a king to a crisp? Kings are worth burning because of what they symbolise. The violence with which Hop-Frog extracts his revenge exceeds his needs and the needs of the plot. Why should Symons assume that one meaning ousts another? King, patron, patriarch have merited death for their cruelty, and Poe slays them all with one fictive blow, as Kafka does in his 'Parables'.

Symons's interest in the literal gives Poe's 'minor' tales equal emphasis with the more readily analysable ones like 'The Fall of the House of Usher'. But if it exists anywhere, the genius of Poe lies in the distance between his knowledgeable, even cunning surface craftsmanship and his obsessive themes. The size of this gap is probably unique in literature, and it accounts for the hold Poe's 'surface' has even today.

Poe's apparent ignorance of the springs of his artistic and personal actions makes him fair game for Freudians, but by the same token it also makes him compelling reading to this day for adolescent sensibilities throughout the world. Like Poe himself, his most compulsive readers get their thrills by not knowing and not wanting to know where the feeling comes from. His tales make a dark contrast to the 19th-century novel of education, where knowledge of self and society are the goals. Poe simply doesn't want to know. Even a pseudo-scientific work like his cosmological essay 'Eureka' is tellingly dedicated 'to those who feel rather than to those who think'. And for those readers who want their sensations all the more powerful for being, like most strong feelings, deeply tainted with the repressed, Poe has the fictive potion ready. Secret feelings, however, are rebellious, and so the bad boy genius must be punished. Poe punishes himself by filling his world with externalised monsters who savage him for having had the audacity to hint at their hiding-places. He punishes his gullible reader by leaving him stupider than before. 'The Premature Burial' ends with a horse-laugh at readers who thought that particular piece of well-crafted horror was about anything other than getting itself read.

Poe never wrote for the theatre, even though he was the child of travelling actors and had an indisputable talent for tragedy in his own life. Instead, all his work is melodrama, a formulaic theatre of effect. As a rule, characters in Poe's tales don't have dialogue. The only sound apart from the odd melodic arabesque is the hero's choked cry as a figure appears stage-front with vertiginous abruptness. The cry is always one of recognition. The expectation of terror, one of Poe's most brilliant effects, is always satisfied. Imagination always becomes reality in Poe because only the imagination lives at all. It is a sickly life, though, more decadent than romantic. In Poe, imagination never transcends the object that set it going. It can only weaken and decline: suffocation, not aspiration; the maelstrom, not the whirlwind. Roderick Usher is hideously certain that the thudding sounds he hears are his sister, the Lady Madelaine, breaking out of her tomb. 'I dared not – I *dared* not speak! We have put her living in the tomb!' These stifled words are true. Poe's Usher has created this erotic sibling, made her ill, and buried her alive – a repression for which she avenges herself by escaping and returning in demonic form to fetch her other half. As pure narrative, this story is ridiculous; its power comes from its impurity, from the rot below that surface which Symons describes so well.

Alan Ryan

Take it from the Top

An Idea and Its Servants: Unesco from Within
by RICHARD HOGGART *Chatto* £5.95

Richard Hoggart is so firmly identified with the sort of concerns embodied in *The Uses of Literacy* and in the essays in *Speaking to Each Other* that it's almost impossible to imagine him as an Assistant Director General of Unesco, as he was from 1970 to 1975. His talents seem essentially local and particular – not that his concerns are parochial or his resources limited. It's rather that his work gives the reader such a strong sense of where Hoggart starts from, and such a strong sense of how much he minds about particular places and times, particular books and writers. Unesco, by contrast, seems to epitomise the urge to generalise, to wrap oneself in global aspirations, to see oneself as the servant of the achievements of mankind in general and nobody in particular – a state of mind in which it is easy to facilitate international communication between people who haven't actually got anything to say to each other, a prospect which you'd expect Hoggart to look at with revulsion. So he did, and so he does; *An Idea and Its Servants* sets out to persuade us that there is, indeed, a great deal wrong with Unesco, and that there is a built-in temptation for the organisation to degenerate in the two directions of uttering windy generalisations on the one hand and providing jobs for the boys on the other; yet Unesco also does a great deal of good and useful work, too little of which is known about in the developed countries which fund it.

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BODLEY HEAD

What took Hoggart to his five-year stint in Paris was not the lure of cultural globe-trotting but the remark of a delegate from Mali at a conference some years earlier – 'When an old man dies in one of our villages a whole library disappears.' Among the 'indisputably useful activities' which Unesco performs come all the small projects for preserving and safeguarding the achievements of particular places and local cultures. Everyone remembers the large-scale projects like the moving of the temple at Abu Simbel, but what Hoggart obviously values as highly are the 'seed-corn' projects where quite tiny sums of money will get, say, an oral-history project off the ground for long enough to allow the local government or the local university or whatever to learn how to keep it going. It is not entirely clear that Richard Hoggart wouldn't have been happier if he'd been out in the field running particular projects; what he actually had to do was oversee Unesco's work in 'philosophy (a remarkable divisive subject), the social sciences, culture in both the Arts Council and the Ancient Monuments sense, the environment, human rights, racism, "Peace", population and drugs'. This stunning collection does, as he mildly remarks, embrace 'some of the most politically hot and intellectually tricky issues with which Unesco is concerned'. That he survived with his temper intact, and with his faith in Unesco not much dented, says a lot for Hoggart's sense and stamina.

It doesn't, on this evidence, say very much for Unesco's internal organisation; a good deal of *An Idea and Its Servants* is devoted to explaining just how impossible it is to work under the stresses imposed on Unesco. For a start, the usual image of a national civil service cannot be transposed to the international stage without all sorts of amendment. The Director General of Unesco doesn't have a minister to whom he can report – he is got at by Permanent Delegates from the member states, he has to steer his programme through the biennial general conference, and he has to keep his executive board more or less complaisant, but he and the secretariat really are the servants of an idea, or at any rate of the constitution of Unesco. But many, or perhaps most, of the states which belong to Unesco don't really believe that there can be that sort of impartial international civil servant, so that there can't be any genuine consensus on whether the officials of Unesco are independent, supra-national officers or merely brokers mediating between the conflicting national demands on the organisation.

What held the whole thing together for a long time was the personality of the Director General under whom Hoggart served most of his five years. René Maheu gets a pretty mixed report here – he had favourites, gave jobs to people he happened to like, bullied his subordinates in public, and generally exhibited one of the classical French styles of government – peasant aggression in a *grand fonctionnaire* suit. But he vastly expanded Unesco's work, he got professional standards established in cultural conservation, and he took on the politicians unflinchingly. The trouble is, as Hoggart remarks, that if you run a large organisation like that, its capacity for courageous stands is entirely dependent on the man at the top. There is no institutionalised courage, so to speak. That, I suppose, is the strongest impression one gets from this account of Unesco – its aims are worthy, its officers are generally competent, but it constantly under-performs because it is institutionally gutless. It doesn't sound as though the Warden of Goldsmith's College very much misses the glamour and excitement of his five years as ADG.

Antony Polonsky

The Redshirts

The Russian Fascists: Tragedy and Farce in Exile 1925-1945 by JOHN STEPHAN *Hamish Hamilton* £7.50

In its heyday, fascism claimed to be a creed of universal validity. According to Mussolini, the 20th century was to be a

> fascist century . . . never before have the people thirsted for authority, direction, order as they do now. If each age has its doctrine, innumerable symptoms indicate that the doctrine of our age is the fascist one.

Fascism was to provide the basis for a new organisation of the state and its political principles would supersede decadent liberal parliamentarianism and avert the threat of anti-national and Jewish-dominated Bolshevism. Fascist movements mushroomed in the late 1920s and 1930s, their growth stimulated by the desire to emulate the apparent success of Mussolini and Hitler in regenerating their respective countries, by the failure of liberal democracy to deal adequately with the economic and political problems of the post-war world and by the fear of Bolshevism unleashed by the Russian Revolution.

It is hardly surprising that fascist ideas should have found a receptive audience among the two-million-strong Russian diaspora created by the Revolution and Civil War. Rightist radical groups, criticising the Imperial government for its weakness in dealing with the revolutionary threat and demanding more repressive action against Jews and other national minorities, had been a significant force in Russia before 1914. The Bolshevik Revolution had led to an increase in anti-Semitic sentiment as the Jews were held primarily responsible by many on the Right for Russia's woes. White Russian refugees brought with them to Western Europe the Tsarist secret-police forgery, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, and gave it wide circulation. As in Hungary, the civil war provoked dissatisfaction with traditional conservatism and stimulated calls for a goal more likely to win popular support than the promise merely to restore the pre-1917 social and political system. In some cases this led to demands for the creation of a national and solidarist state with fascist overtones. Yet it is striking that, on the whole, the Russian emigration remained aloof from fascist blandishments. Its members were too solidly conservative to take kindly to fascist calls for a national revolution and they remained, for the most part, loyal to the monarchist pretenders who had managed to escape from Russia.

As John Stephan shows in his enlightening and well-researched account, there were three main foci of fascism in the Russian diaspora (and the author's knowledge of both Japanese

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and Russian qualifies him particularly well to attempt this study). The German centre never amounted to anything significant. Its Baltic German component, whose most important representative was Alfred Rosenberg, became one of the strands of German National Socialism to which it contributed its characteristic hatred of Slavs. The actual Russian fascists in Germany never overcame an almost insuperable handicap: at least until very late in the war, the Nazis were not willing to concede to the Slavs any role in their New Order. As Hitler put it, 'We do not want to convert the Russians to National Socialism, but to make them our tools.' Russian fascist organisations in Germany thus operated under very severe constraints. They were banned from activity during the period of the Nazi-Soviet pact and even as late as 1943 one of their leaders, Boris Tedli, whose loyalty to the Third Reich had never wavered, was arrested by the Gestapo.

The second centre of Russian fascism was in the United States. Its leader was Anastase Vonsiatsky, a member of a russified family of German lesser nobility whose father had been commander of the Warsaw gendarmerie and who was assassinated by a dissatisfied police informer in 1910. The death of his father and his experiences in the Russian Civil War made Vonsiatsky a deeply convinced counter-revolutionary, and he was drawn to fascism because it seemed the only effective anti-communist force. An incorrigible dreamer and romantic, his marriage to an American heiress 21 years his senior gave him the opportunity to indulge in his political fantasies. His All-Russian Fascist Party never attracted the support of more than a few of his croneys and was above all an offshoot of his exuberant personality. His movement was not anti-Semitic and had virtually no contact with other fascist groups in the US or elsewhere. Vonsiatsky even went to far as to assert, 'I would not like to see the United States become fascist. In fascist countries we [Russian fascists] are not allowed to carry out our work.' His downfall was caused by his rash gift of $2,800 to Fritz Kuhn, leader of the pro-Nazi German-American *Bund*. Kuhn used the money to facilitate his flight from the US in 1941 and Vonsiatsky hoped that he would put the Russian fascist case to Hitler. Vonsiatsky was arraigned by the US government for espionage. Sentenced to five years in jail, he was released in 1946 and abandoned politics.

It was in Manchuria, with its Russian population of 155,000, that fascism grew to be a significant political force. Its centre was the railway junction of Harbin, where Russians made up 120,000 of the town's 485,000 people in 1922. Living on the border of the Soviet Union, Harbin's Russians could still cherish hopes of a return to their homeland while anti-Jewish sentiments were inflamed by the prosperity of the town's 13,000 Jews. The leader of the Russian fascists here was a singularly unattractive refugee from Siberia, Konstantin Rodzaevsky, who combined a hatred of the Jews as the originators of the revolution with a fairly primitive form of corporatism modelled more or less on that of Mussolini. His political opportunity came with the Japanese occupation of Manchuria. The Kwantung army was ferociously anti-Soviet and was looking for collaborators among the White Russian population. Rodzaevsky's co-operation with the Japanese involved him in a succession of disappointments. After the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war in 1937 it became increasingly unlikely that Japan would actually invade the Soviet Union. Rodzaevsky's Russian Fascist Party became even more expendable as far as the Japanese were concerned after the Nazi-Soviet pact and the Soviet-Japanese non-aggression pact of April 1941. When the Soviets invaded Manchuria in 1945, Rodzaevsky escaped to Tientsin where he decided that he should come to terms with Stalin. He wrote to the Soviet dictator declaring that, 'Stalinism is exactly what we mistakenly called "Russian Fascism" cleansed of extremes, illusions and errors.'

He then voluntarily returned to the USSR. He was put in jail and executed in 1946, and his movement sank without trace. His conversion did not save him, yet it cannot be denied that Rodzaevsky was in a sense a prophet. The mixture of social radicalism, anti-Semitism and Russian nationalism which he propagated bears a disconcerting resemblance to the ideology of the Soviet Union today.

Jonathan Keates

I Say, I Say

Snakes and Ladders by DIRK BOGARDE *Chatto* £5.95
Boothby: Recollections of A Rebel by LORD BOOTHBY *Hutchinson* £6.95
Insider Outsider by GAIA SERVADIO *Weidenfeld* £6.50

The essential 'I' of autobiography varies its physical nature according to the writer's personality. Here it has the hieratic solemnity of an Egyptian obelisk, there the nakedness of a telegraph pole. At one moment it is a pillar for Simeon Stylites, at another a lance for a Don

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WH Allen

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Quixote. *Snakes and Ladders* adheres to the best traditions in managing to distract us, by whatever means, from noting the number of times the pronoun is actually repeated. As though to remind us that when not posturing on camera he really can write, Dirk Bogarde prints a couple of poems in an appendix. Such an assurance was quite unnecessary, given the skill and charm with which he manipulated the materials of *A Postillion Struck by Lightning*.

The same selective reticence, an adroit mixture of anecdote, character-sketch and self-analysis, makes him appear pleasantly bemused at his own triumph, much of which is due to an intelligence seldom found amid the chewy montelimar and crunchy praline of thespian egos. Guided by this and by the promptings of his own developing talent, he survived death-by-mediocrity in the 1950s Rank star machine. Remember *The Singer Not The Song* and the *Doctor* films? He is glumly funny about these and the legendarily awful Liszt biopic *Song Without End*, during which he had to practise the piano till his fingers bled, his weight dropped to seven stone, and the director King Vidor died of a heart attack.

Still better than this, or the vignettes of Kay Kendall and the *monstre sacré* Judy Garland, is Bogarde's closing account of his work with Visconti, for whom he invites us to share his unaffected admiration. The making of *Death in Venice* (for which, predictably, the American backers required the boy to be changed to a girl) clearly sets a logical term to the actor's search for satisfaction within his own work. His success in these witty and accomplished memoirs is to persuade us that acting is perhaps less important to him than the need to regain the innocence and security so precisely conveyed in his earlier book.

Politics has the same deadeningly embalming effect upon the self as the once-famous petrifying spring at Matlock, where visitors to the spa watched in amazement as wigs, oranges and bits of lace fossilised in the water. Lord Boothby, whose face gazes at us from the dustjacket with a rather touching expression of reptilian gloom, will be recalled for his toad-voiced pronouncements on *Any Questions* in the days of Freddie Grisewood and Lady Violet Bonham-Carter. This is dealt with in a chapter headed 'The Media'. Other titles suggest, if they do not actually ask us to assume, that details of the author's social and political life are intrinsic to our understanding of 'Germany Between The Wars' or 'Europe After the War'.

The narrative style is comparably portentous. Nowhere is the 'I' more lethal to credibility: 'I was with him in his room at the House of Commons when he told me that he had decided to resign, and I told him he was quite right'; 'as I was very good-looking in my twenties, I was chased all over the place, and rather enjoyed it'; 'I was delighted to find that Thomas Beecham agreed with me about this'. At the odd clearing in the pronoun plantation, we stumble across brilliant sketches of the 1931 National Government or of the drivelling nonentities, MacDonald, Chamberlain and Runciman, representing Britain at the Lausanne Conference. Such lucid intervals only serve to mark the limitations of their author's talent in a field towards which he was propelled with so many auguries of success.

'The only time that Ken Tynan looked at me with interest was when he saw me at lunch sitting next to Laurence Olivier.' You should be so lucky, Gaia. Luck, indeed, and a certain species of crackpot impertinence have carried La Servadio down some pretty rum corridors, among them those of the Ministry of Defence, on the subject of whose interested noises following her book on Siberia she is excellently amusing. Gaia is the Gräfin Hahn-Hahn of her day. Should you ask who the hell *she* was, the Gräfin (her full name means 'Countess Cock-Cock') was a German lady novelist who came to peep at England and wowed the salons of 1846. Like her original, Gaia imagines she is unconventional, which she is not, and that being foreign enables her to see England for what it is. The resultant social analysis is haphazardly accurate: the rest, her account of a wholly unremarkable existence amid the ormolu of society journalism, is gushing, hysterical and malicious. A load, in short, of vulgarly readable cock-cock.

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"One of those very useful *and* very enjoyable books that the learned can seldom write, and the entertaining seldom achieve — clear, detailed and witty in sufficiency." Angus Wilson, *Observer* £10.00

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In this bestseller from France, Hélias takes the reader back 50 years — though it could be 500 — to the village of his childhood, where the trials of life were continuous and the question of survival was always open. "Reaching back into his memories, Hélias brings us the women's embroidered clothes, the peasants' pitchforks, the gusts of wind off the sea, the songs, the tragedies, the stories, the terrors." *Le Monde* £10.80

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John Montague

Foreign Field

Paddy's whole place was a clearing house:
A public phone in the hallway,
People huddled around the tiled fireplace.

But we were given tea in the front parlour,
Chill as the grave, a good place to talk,
Among brass trinkets, Long Kesh harps.

A patrol catwalks through the front garden.
'You can see how we are being protected'
Paddy jokes, with a well rehearsed laugh.

A single shot. 'Jesus, that was close.'
The whole patrol crouches to the grass,
Though one slumps. 'Your man's hurt.

You don't take cover with your rifle
Between your legs, beginning to dive.'
'Let's way out and see if he's alive.'

All the soldiers barked was 'Freeze!'
But Paddy led us to where he fell,
A chubby lad, only about eighteen,

That hangdog look, hair close cropped,
Surplus of a crowding England, now
Dying in a puddle of wet and blood.

And still the soldiers: 'Don't move!'
Paddy ran back in to fetch some linen.
'Don't touch him!' He kneels down

To cover his skull tenderly, a broken egg.
'When a man's got, he's a non-combatant'
Paddy commented, shepherding us inside.

A moment later, an army ambulance
races up,
An army doctor leaps down. Out again,
Playing, the children chant:
'Die you bastard'.

Next morning they checked out the damage.
Someone had cut back a tree in a garden,
Opening a new line of fire, instead.

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Zahir Jamal

The Vale of Laughter

The World According to Garp by JOHN IRVING *Gollancz* £5.95
The Pardoner's Tale by JOHN WAIN *Macmillan* £4.95
Captain Pantoja and the Special Service by MARIO VARGLAS LLOSA *Cape* £5.50

The suspicion that living remains a highly experimental form of existence not unreasonably oppresses many citizens of America the Unsafe. So many incentives to keep going, the confused resident finds himself musing, yet such powerful inducements to fall dead. It's the kind of anxiety that sprouts thickly in *The World According To Garp*, John Irving's caringly funny treatment of tenacity and mistrust amid his nation's endless possibilities of harm.

In the compact, muscular figure of T. S. Garp, ex-schoolboy wrestler and dedicated writer, parent, husband and home-maker, Irving has supplied the American imagination with one of its last puritan folk-heroes. For Garp is a born *worrier*, a ceaseless, impossible, energetic, inconsolable brooder on threats to health and hearth who yearns to take his family into all-protecting custody. He's ready, at the sound of a zippy downshift, to sprint through the neighbourhood after hapless motorists and shame them with thoughts of mangled toddlers. Bed-time fables for his children mushroom doggedly into baroque allegories of the Green Cross Code. And in a landscape dismayingly rich in fast cars, outsize dogs, throat-blocking confections, child-molesters, cranks and marriage-breaking lusts, actual horrors soon compete with bogeys for a place in his dream and fiction. Unnerved, 'Garp thought himself to be psychologically unfit for parenthood. Then he worried about *that,* too, and felt all the more anxious for his children. What if their most dangerous enemy turned out to be *him*?'

How the bad dream came true forms only one of several episodes poised tautly between nightmare and farce; a poise managed with sufficient aplomb to bring off an abrasive collision between gruesome sexual dread, parental trauma and sharp pathos. The mixture is typical of Irving's deeply inventive narrative which, over four generations and two continents, offers justice to wonky life at her quirky work. Characteristically, Garp himself originates in a screwy screw when his mother Jenny, a World War II nurse, hauls herself atop Technical Sergeant Garp, a ball-turrent gunner lobotomised by flak. Jenny, later to be revealed through her autobiography as a pioneer feminist, can't see why impregnation should involve all that *fussin* with men. Her compliant but erect helpmate expires shortly after donating to her cause, bequeathing his initials of rank for the boy's name and 'vulnerability to awesome violence' for his nature. With America the Experimental Irving is infinitely patient. Sexual reversals get gentle treatment as the novel explores Garp's pronounced motherly urges, his independent wife's cool adulteries and, most sympathetically, the confused drives of Roberta, formerly Robert, Muldoon, a vivacious transsexual with a lingering talent for football.

Yet Irving's solicitude on behalf of his determined individualists would seem indulgent without that keen sense of mortal frailty which defines his sorrowing humour. In unguarded moments, admittedly, that sense can turn damply elegaic, a mood evidently influenced by readings of Marcus Aurelius. In an altogether tougher vein, however, is the novel's defencelessness in a culture where assassination is a 'popular amateur sport'. Sobering, too, are Irving's believably exact intuitions of a more familiar limit to vitality; the first smell of decay in a child's clear breath souring faintly in sleep; the minute progress of discoloration on perfect young teeth. Perhaps the novelist really is, as Garp suggests, 'a doctor who sees only terminal cases'.

Seemingly terminal to those it hits, we're often told, is a bout of middle-aged blues. John Wain's new book contracts the stuff twice. It's a narrative-within-a-narrative in which a writer and his character shadow each other from second loves and second hurts to a grey acceptance of second-best. In the wake of a failed romance, novelist Giles Hermitage begins to visit a dying woman who asks his help in exorcising her past. Solace for the solacer materialises in the beguiling shape of the woman's daughter, a frisky *gamine* whose riggish antics soon have Giles sloughing off the years. Interlaced with these developments, his current novel proceeds to relate a tale of comparably flawless banality; all about one Gus Howkins, an over-40 who gratefully plays troubador to a distressed creature he plucks from a drowning Mini. Wain may have wheeled out this two-handed engine to demonstrate something arresting about life's symbiotic relations with art; but in narratives which, over every hump and hope, stay related mainly by cliché, the point hardly seems worth disentangling from the general tedium. No more successful is the management of idiom. Howkins's attempts to sound virile emerge queerly somewhere between Bogart and George Bowling. Unsurprisingly, given self-awareness of this quality, the painful business of supplying large wants on shrunken opportunities can only be had here at levels which rob it of depth and urgency.

Up the Amazon they supply large wants differently. Through Vargas Llosa's brilliantly comic montage of army dispatches, official letters, radio bulletins and newspaper articles, we learn of the farcically obedient efforts of the good soldier Pantoja to discharge an unusual bidding. He's captain of the 'specialists', a brigade of robust whores on service in the jungle. In dogged officialese, our Peruvian Schweik reports the steamy needs and deeds of such characters as Knockers and the Chink; and as the mission succeeds, his dispatches erupt into a linguistic *tour de force* in which the idioms of quartermaster, cost accountant and drill-sergeant battle uproariously to impose martial order on the inflammatory affairs of 'Pantiland'. Pantoja is a minor comic masterpiece, one of those natural functionaries upon whose blind and unambitious loyalties all bureaucratic tyrannies depend.

ANTHONY BURGESS
1985
"A superb book — one worthy to rank with Zamyatin's **We** . . . more powerful than **Brave New World**, and I don't hesitate to call it a better book . . . It is an exciting, bleakly fascinating story: told with enormous erudition and wit, its indignation is blazingly imaginative, furiously vital and gives us hope."
Martin Seymour-Smith Financial Times
HUTCHINSON £4.95

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The Prudence Farmer Award

James Fenton

Of the Martian School

In deciding not to give Craig Raine the Prudence Farmer Award last year, John Carey referred to the poet as 'immensely talented and unerringly rebarbative'. The first two words of this judgment have found their way on to the dustjacket of Mr Raine's first collection, *The Onion, Memory* (Oxford £2.25). The last part of the phrase needs, I feel, some qualification.

It is true that, in both his journalism and his poetry, Mr Raine's penchant for the outrageous image can create some startlingly repulsive effects. In one article Mr Raine claimed to have suffered from a wart 'the size and texture of a brussels sprout' – highly unlikely, horrible if true. I often wonder what it must be like to be Mrs Raine, whose lying-in was described by her husband in unloving detail. At one moment, readers of the *Sunday Times* were told, 'her anus repuckered like an Italian tomato'. How does one face the neighbours after that? Fortunately, though, the Prudence Farmer Award is concerned only with poems published in the NEW STATESMAN during the course of the year. Reading them through, I found that the question was not whom to choose, but which poem of Mr Raine's to select as the winner. It was perfectly clear to me that his work had been the most interesting and original to appear on these pages in the period. More, it would stand out if all the British periodicals of the time were included in the terms of the Award. I dissent most strongly from the opinion of Julian Symons, in his review of *The Onion, Memory,* in which he finds these poems to be merely clever. Mere cleverness is often found in Mr Raine's journalism, which seems to be saying, 'Look at me! Look at me!'. The poems are different. They say, '*Look at this.*'

It is time, furthermore, to ease up on that prejudice against cleverness and to open a campaign against stupidity in poetry. It is time, too, for an attack on the deliberate mystification of the reader, behind which the second-rate has found it convenient to lurk. Mr Raine's poems are complex. They are for the page, rather than for oral delivery. They demand a second and third reading. But they do reward the reader. The puzzles are there to be solved, solved with pleasure. And there is more to the poetry than puzzle-solving. Mr Raine has developed, it seems to me, the phenomenological style. By this I mean that the poet, during the contemplation of his subject, deliberately rejects certain modes of consciousness. When he describes, for instance, a butcher or a grocer, he is not socially engaged (like, say, R. S. Thomas, writing about one of his parishioners) nor is he alienated (like Douglas Dunn, looking out into Terry Street). The only activity is that of a free contemplation, without ulterior motive, eager if anything for the most improbable discoveries. So the coin in the grocer's hand becomes a stigma, and the grocer 'smiles like a modest quattrocento Christ' – modest, because the thumb is crooked over the coin. This is both exact and outrageous.

The poem which I finally chose is based on a string of misunderstandings. The Martian's point of view is a useful fiction, but it is not unlike the poet's own, which always insists on presenting the familiar at its most strange. The misunderstandings, appropriately enough for an Oxford poet, are like riddles in the Anglo-Saxon mode. Once solved, they do not lose their interest. Instead there is a double pathos.

The Martian expresses his enormous sympathy for us and our world. One cannot help feeling saddened by his sadness. Without wishing to solve any riddles, I can only say that nobody in my experience has written so feelingly about the object described in couplets 10-12. There are two faults: 'soft machine' is an intrusive modern cliché, and – again I do not want to solve a riddle – there is surely an inconsistency between the basic misunderstanding in the first three couplets and the knowledge shown in the fifth. What does the last word of the ninth one mean to the Martian?

Apart from Mr Raine's poems, the most interesting work of the year came from Christopher Reid, and since there is an affinity between the two poets I decided to snitch some of the money that would have gone Mr Raine's way and create a second prize for the occasion. Mr Reid's first collection, *Arcadia*, will be published next year. On the basis of what he has shown us so far, it should be excellent. 'Baldanders' (but what does the title mean, for heaven's sake?) is an extended imagist joke. There is a Martian sympathy for the subject, who is seen first as an object of scorn (a catasta is a stand on which slaves are put up for sale, and, by extension, a pillory or stocks) and then undergoes a series of ever wilder transformations until the pay-off couplet. Apart from lines 11 and 12, which seem to hold up the action unnecessarily, I should describe this as a minor masterpiece of the Martian school – a school that ought to be noticed, since it has enrolled two of the best poets writing in England today.

Craig Raine

A Martian Sends a Postcard Home

Caxtons are mechanical birds with
many wings

and some are treasured for their markings –

they cause the eyes to melt
or the body to shriek without pain.

I have never seen one fly, but
sometimes they perch on the hand.

Mist is when the sky is tired of flight
and rests its soft machine on ground:

then the world is dim and bookish
like engravings under tissue paper.

Rain is when the earth is television.
It has the property of making colours darker.

Model T is a room with the lock inside –
a key is turned to free the world

for movement, so quick there is a film
to watch for anything missed.

But time is tied to the wrist
or kept in a box, ticking with impatience.

In homes, a haunted apparatus sleeps,
that snores when you pick it up.

If the ghost cries, they carry it
to their lips and soothe it to sleep

with sounds. And yet, they wake it up
deliberately, by tickling with a finger.

Only the young are allowed to suffer
openly. Adults go to a punishment room

with water but nothing to eat.
They lock the door and suffer the noises

alone. No one is exempt
and everyone's pain has a different smell.

At night, when all the colours die,
they hide in pairs

and read about themselves –
in colour, with their eyelids shut.

Christopher Reid

Baldanders

Pity the poor weightlifter
alone on his catasta,

who carries his pregnant belly
in the hammock of his leotard

like a melon wedged in a shopping-bag . . .
A volatile prima donna,

he flaps his fingernails dry,
then – squat as an armchair –

gropes about the floor
for inspiration, and finds it there.

His Japanese muscularity
resolves to domestic parody.

Glazed, like a mantelpiece frog,
he strains to become

the World Champion (somebody, answer it!)
Human Telephone.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Benedict Nightingale

The Alexandrian Duet

Antony and Cleopatra *Stratford*
The Changeling *Aldwych*
The Ragged-Trousered Philanthropists *Riverside*

According to the RSC's in-house Deep Throat, the eminent director of *Antony and Cleopatra* was so delighted by the initial rehearsals with his five or six leading players that he rang head office, suggesting that the remaining 30 or 40 parts be cut. The answer, needless to say, was gently discouraging; and yet, equally needless to say, there's a sense in which Peter Brook, being Peter Brook, has had his way. Nations and continents may be changing hands beyond the glazed panes of the concave locker-room in which the bulk of the evening occurs: inside, life is sparse and stark, not least when the characters are supposed to be frolicking in the Ptolemaic glee-factory. For some reason Mr Brook's Antony and Cleopatra, who talk interminably of sport and pleasure, are less capable of throwing a good party than Mr Brook's Pompey, who doesn't. On the latter's yacht, the guests dance, spin and scrag each other in a passable imitation of fun: in swinging Egypt there are no guests to have fun, nor any fun to have guests. Imagine Lawrence Durrell as he might have been rewritten by Angela Brazil, and you'll begin to grasp the visual impact. The Alexandrian quartet of Charmian, Iras, Mardian and Cleo perch upright on lonely cushions, hair chopped short, like girls in a boarding school of somewhat butch tendencies; and not so much as a picnic of crisps and lemonade comes to soften the austerity of their midnights.

The aim is presumably to concentrate our attention on the intimacies at the play's centre, an idea that might prove more successful with protagonists other than Alan Howard and Glenda Jackson: he, so dashing a Henry V and fine a Coriolanus; she, *the* Elizabeth I and, dare I say, a born Octavius Caesar. For the first two-thirds of the evening, at least, each of them is an essentially public being, doomed to find itself trapped in an essentially private production. He's an Arthurian hero whose nose still flares at the smell of battle: only after the shame of defeat does he audibly thicken and visibly stumble into the 'noble ruin' that Scarus has already dubbed him. And her main trait would seem to be a longing for power: over him, over her strangely depopulated court, over anyone unlucky enough to stray near the fly-trap. It goes without saying that in both cases much is missed.

Mr Howard's glistening Lancelot is far removed from what Antony surely should be, the ignominious slave of his own unstoppable glands. Miss Jackson is not the skittish girl who can 'hop 40 paces through the public street', nor, for that matter, the erratic, pettish woman who, quite unselfconsciously, plays emotional hopscotch round the baffled Antony. It is difficult to believe she could be so susceptible to flattery or, indeed, to sexual passion; difficult to see her as the over-ripe plum that is variously described as whore, strumpet, trull and Egyptian dish. And if, like Enobarbus, we were seeking meteorological metaphors for her sighs and tears, we would be less likely to find them in 'storms and tempests' than in plagues of locusts or showers of frogs. To sum her up, she's self-aware, icily observant, sardonic to the point of contempt, potentially ruthless, and much more self-sufficient than the Cleopatra Shakespeare would appear to postulate. Not least, both she and Mr Howard have, to a quite unusual degree, the snap of natural command: which makes it all the odder that they have practically nobody in the way of servants or soldiery to be commanded.

That said, let me hastily make some concessions. It is notoriously difficult to mount so sprawling a play satisfactorily, and it may actually be impossible to do justice to the principals, especially to Cleopatra, in an age which finds it hard to credit the existence of sky-splintering affections. Recent stage-history has not been vastly encouraging. Edith Evans, so Tynan tells us, was 'Lady Bracknell cruelly starved of cucumber sandwiches'; Peggy Ashcroft, 'a ravenous famine victim'; Margaret Leighton, a neurotic society hostess zonked out on tranquillisers and martinis; Vanessa Redgrave, a half-cracked flapper; Janet Suzman, a canny and knowing precursor of Christabel Pankhurst; and Dorothy Tutin, an inscrutable pedigree cat with an odd, out-of-breath purr. Miss Jackson's snarky dictator is a better-than-average contribution to these archives. Moreover, she and Howard do generate some mutual intensity towards the evening's end. They clutch and grab at each other, as if finding a last refuge from the world that has failed them, and they howl very feelingly at one another's presumed suicides. It is not enough to give their passion tragic stature. But it does much to steam up the switched-off sauna that the airy, empty set is in danger of resembling.

Then again, the spareness of the proceedings does at least mean that the supporting actors aren't lost in throngs of eunuchs or senators. There's a hectic, impetuous Pompey from David Suchet and, from Patrick Stewart, a marvellously mellow Enobarbus, a genial voluptuary who actually dies with a smile, thinking of those gaudy nights with his tutor Antony. Interestingly enough, this is a feeling to some extent shared by Jonathan Pryce's repressed but sentient Octavius. At the beginning he still hero-worships Antony, and is nervously thrilled to be able to marry him off to Octavia, the beloved sister he tends to fondle or (quaintly) massage whenever she emerges from cold-storage; and at the end he shows a more than official grief at the passing of the 'old ruffian'. There are false moments in between, notably when Mr Pryce scampers onstage triumphantly yelling 'he calls me boy' and trailing Antony's challenge as if it were a kite. But, on the whole, his performance reconciles stealth and steel with more capacity for affection than most Octavii possess. Mr Pryce's emergence, if not yet as the backbone of the RSC, at least as a prime rib, has been one of the pleasures of the present Stratford season. However uneven Brook's production in toto, he has certainly given an already burgeoning career an extra push or two upwards.

At London headquarters things are much more exotic than at Stratford – or, for that matter, than they were at the Riverside Studios last month. Peter Gill, you'll recall, brought a Brookish severity to the tale of the spoiled virgin who hires a man she detests to kill her unwanted fiancé, only to become the assassin's sexual prisoner. But Terry Hands sets his *Changeling* in a gaunt, brooding box of fuliginous red and, in Diana Quick, has an actress capable of understanding Middleton's pre-Freudian aperçu, that there's 'scarce a thing but is both loved and loathed'. She suggests from the start that Joanna's hysterical disgust conceals a cloying fascination, and so there's an awful inevitability about her increasingly abject and sottish surrender to Emrys James's Deflores, a seducer who somehow manages to make menace tender and implacable sensuality gentle. Mr Hands doesn't quite succeed in reconciling Rowley's bedlam sub-plot with Middleton's existential tragedy, and he sometimes succumbs to overstatement, exaggeration. To show the principals copulating like dogs in mid-stage, while a dummy of Joanna makes a respectable marriage at the front, is a crudish and surely mistaken attempt to emphasise their moral ugliness by making them physically ugly as well. Would someone so swooningly sensitive to the honeypot as a whole – 'she smells all amber' – really be satisfied with a brusque rear-end poke? But the error is not compounded, and by the erotic savageries of the end has come to seem no more than a passing pockmark on a production which is full of grisly assurance.

Meanwhile, the Joint Stock company has moved into Riverside itself, having acquired enough skill with the brush to persuade us that we are, in fact, watching a gang of painters decorating a house in Edwardian Mugsborough, alias Hastings. There's always something seductive about the sight of men at work, but here their expertise has a crusading point: capitalism, seeking the maximum of profit from the minimum of outlay, is constantly reducing what might be a labour of love to a hurried botch-up. Several of my colleagues have, I see, patronised Stephen Lowe's coolly indignant adaptation of Tressell as simple-minded and dated, and it's quite true that our bosses don't sport names like Didlum, Sweater and Grinder, and aren't usually busy cutting hourly rates from 7d to 6½d. But have the realities of economic power altered so vastly since 1906?

There is, I would suggest something satisfying about the way Tressell and Lowe cut through the complexities to a plain truth: that most people are obliged to sell their labour in return for nothing more lasting than the money with which to enrich further the owning class. William Gaskill, entrusted with orchestrating this message, gets such selfless and consistent performances from his players that I must name either none or all. Bruce Alexander, Christian Burgess, Peter-Hugo Daly, Ian Ireland, Fred Pearson, Harriet Walter, Mark Wing-Davey: a compendium of excellence.

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Films

John Coleman

Rabbit Redux

Watership Down (U) *Ritz; Plaza; Classic, Oxford Street*
The Cat from Outer Space (U) *London release from 22 October*
Shipwreck! (U) *Warner 2; ABC Edgware Road*
Second Chance (AA) *Minema; Cinecenta; Sherlock Holmes Cinema, Baker Street*
Blood Relatives (X) *Studio 2; Scene 2; Screen on the Green*
Word is Out (AA) *Scala*

The signal feat of Richard Adams's bestseller, *Watership Down,* was to find a middle ground between anthropomorphism and your actual animal behaviour. His rabbits spoke and even schemed but they were frequently, unhumanly at a loss: better equipped than us to scale hills yet less able to gauge the terrain above, their above being so much higher than ours; prey to dozens of real or imagined enemies; confounded by such man-made commonplaces as bridges and boats. The rich ankle-level flora of Berkshire provided their food and often their food for thought, and Adams devoted a scrupulous loving care to this vivid undergrowth, under sun and rain, by night and day: a cony's context. Like *Lord of the Rings,* whose epic aspirations are surely echoed in Adams's book, this tale of trekking, sometimes tragic rabbits found even more hugely enthusiastic audiences in America than here (the magnetism of a pioneering past still active?) and it should not be surprising that an American, Martin Rosen, bravely undertook to translate it to the screen. One can only thank Frith, the story's prevailing deity, that he discarded early notions of people in skins and settled for animation; and then go on, in a modified, British sort of way, to thank Rosen and his team of animators for having the taste and wit to have pretty firmly de-Bugsed his Bunnies. In a cagey preface to a caption paperback of pictures from the film, *The Watership Down Picture Book* (Penguin £2.95), Mr Adams admits to not much liking the drawn Fiver, the small Cassandra rabbit whose initial forebodings of trouble back at t'warren set off the perilous migration, but he *does* approve the dignified Hazel, Fiver's elder brother, who willy-nilly becomes the wanderers' chief. Rightly, I think. With one glaring but short-lived exception, when Fiver's pursuit of a Hazel presumed dead lets in the mandatory song, Art Garfunkel singing 'Bright Eyes' (is this a record? you bet it is), Disneyfication is down to a minimum.

Which presents its own problems. I don't wish to sound racist, but one rabbit looks much like another rabbit to me. Without benefit of the original text, here inevitably telescoped, one wonders how readily viewers will twig what's happening and to whom. Sensibly, well-known and distinctive voices (an absolute ripple of pleasure traversed the press show as Ralph Richardson's accents rose from a hole in the ground) do a lot to differentiate the long-ears: John Hurt, Richard Briers, John Bennett, Harry Andrews and Denholm Elliott invisibly serve, and there is some marvellously fractured mid-European English from Zero Mostel as the one allowably comic character, the helpful gull, Kehaar. It is a seemly affair with a few moments of high excitement and a little authentic pathos. And yet, in its very determination to do right by Mr Adams and his readers, in its general reverence, it somehow slumps between two stools. Graceless of me, no doubt, but I wanted something else and sensed two possibilities. Either – and this the harder and probably prohibitively expensive – the down-to-earth, humming and tangled detail of a rabbit's landscape (and not just a token insect or two on a token plant). Or – and now I sell the pass with a vengeance – more downright vulgarity, more blood and guts, more *nastiness,* even if it meant forfeiting a 'U' certificate. After all, enough fuss has been made about *Watership Down* as a book for adults that children may enjoy too.

Balefully underlining the imminence of half-term and the contempt of the movie industry for the child mind come *The Cat from Outer Space* and *Shipwreck!* The first has a real moggy with a magic crystal collar, crash-landing in a cutprice spacecraft. Blessed with speech, it soon has a friendly scientist working to get it airborne again and half the military, led by General Stilton (Harry Morgan wasted), on its tail. That collar, when glowing, freezes opposition in its tracks, makes billiard balls behave outrageously ('Just show me how to hold the pole,' says the plain feminine interest, grasping a cue, in the script's one good line), and shrinks gold. The best joke is perpetrated on the synopsis: 'A Close Encounter of the "Furred" Kind', to my rage and envy. The second length of tedium is by the team that gave us *The Wilderness Family*, an offer I was disposed to reject. Stewart Raffill wrote and directed, Robert Logan is once again an ineffably clean-cut hero, and I swear the same big, bad bear who wrought havoc in the Rockies is here on hand to chase the cast, or castaways – on an Alaskan island, after Logan has sailed his young family, a cute black stowaway kid and a nubile lady photo-journalist into a howling storm – up and down the sand dunes. Hardly a hair out of place after their ordeal and with rapidly domesticated fauna making itself useful, these plastic adventurers end up safe. For any idiot in the house with doubts, the phrase 'It's going to be all right' is uttered by someone or other at five-minute intervals. Sex is indicated as follows. He: 'You wanna take a walk?' She: 'Sure.' For one joyous instant it looked as if tragedy was going to strike when the younger daughter lay unbreathing for about a reel, but along comes cleversocks Logan to give her the kiss of life.

Claude Lelouch is on infamous form with *Second Chance* (subtitled at the Minema, dubbed elsewhere). In other words, he invents a silly, implausible and tasteless story and then proceeds to tart it up into a colour-sup. celebration of love and friendship by means of glamorous leading ladies (Catherine Deneuve, Anouk Aimée), a camera out to 'sell' the product as if it were a gourmet TV dinner – which it is – and one of those merry, jigging scores for which Francis Lai is notorious. Deneuve – jailed 15 years earlier for abetting her lover's unintended murder of her rapist, realising the only way she can endure her sentence is by having a baby to come out to and therefore getting herself impregnated by a male nurse in the prison hospital (actually, in a loo) – emerges into the world as Lelouch's commercial opens, intent on reclaiming the son. Simon (fetchingly played by Jean-Jacques Briot), whom she, with a blinding selfishness the film never considers, has delivered into state hands. After Simon makes a pass at her, Deneuve realises she'd better explain he came from her womb: that little awkwardness over, Simon has an affair with mum's best friend, delicious Anouk, a kleptomaniac fresh out of stir. As if this were not the acme of cosiness, Simon then arranges for mum to fall for his favourite teacher, fetchingly played by Francis Huster. Charles Denner makes a fetching lawyer, now a bit rueful *he* didn't inseminate Deneuve. Life seemed ever so grey as we trooped out of the cinema afterwards.

The other Gallic Claude, Chabrol, makes a bemusing hash of an Ed McBain novel in *Blood Relatives*, done in Canada and unforgivably dubbing a bedraggled Stéphane Audran with a screechy monotone in a minor role. Donald Sutherland sleepwalks through as a detective failing to detect the murderous culprit apparent to us an hour before. Two teenage girls have been slashed in an alley by a sex maniac, one living to tell scraps of the tale. Donald Pleasence has a bit as a reasonable suspect and David Hemmings plays a filleted red herring. Room left simply (but strongly) to recommend *Word is Out,* a fascinating, sometimes very funny, always upbeat series of intercut filmed interviews with 26 male and female homosexuals. Gay, in the way some of us still like to use it, *is* the word.

We should like to correct a confusing misprint in Peter Conrad's piece on Wagner a fortnight ago. The second sentence of paragraph three should have run as follows: 'Drama and music are, as Brecht prescribed, ranklingly alienated.'

Sport

Russell Davies

AOK

Golf is the great fantasy game. In other sports, one's daydreamed victories quickly dwindle into absurdity. As the hair drops out and the stomach grows slacker, the realisation suddenly comes to a man that he will never dance around Wembley in sweat-sodden shorts with the lid of the FA Cup on his head. Even cricket, among whose foremost practitioners there are several obese and balding specimens, somehow discourages dreams of a belated rise to fame. One senses that it would take a decade's experience just to know how to get out of the way of some of the balls bowled in the modern game. But golf's attraction holds. The tiniest success on a golf course – and it is one of the charms of the game that, every so often, the merest swiping idiot 'brings off' a shot the Open Champion could not have bettered – keeps a vision of eventual infallibility alive. I have never been on a golf course at all, except as part of an urchins' campaign (conducted *many* years ago in Blackpool) to filch successfully-struck balls off the middle of the fairways and hide them under the lip of

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the nearest cavernous bunker; but on one of my two teenage trips to a pitch-and-putt course in Wythenshawe, I hit the flag off the tee at a 110-yard hole, and have never ceased to believe in my natural aptitude for this 'simple' game. I suppose I had better make my astonishing charge to the top of the rankings pretty soonish ('Davies, who did not take up the game until the comparatively advanced age of the 32, holed in one at the 110-yard, pitch-and-putt style third hole, and was awarded a bungalow in Buenos Aires'); though every time I see a slumping, wispy figure like Neil Coles stuffing cheques into his baggy trousers, I begin to think I can delay a little longer yet.

International Championship Golf, after all, is rapidly organising itself into the sport in which nobody is allowed to lose. There is a title for everybody. This week's Colgate World Match Play Championship at Wentworth provided a wonderful example. For a start, the name of the event is gorgeously inflated, masking the absence from the guest list of dozens of top international tournament players (not to mention match-play specialists) who could have seen off some of the actual invitees, in some cases, after only 18 of the scheduled 36 holes per round. Then again, it is interesting to look at the case of a Colgate competitor who more or less did that very thing this year; Tom Watson of America, who beat Dale Hayes of South Africa by a monster 11 and 9 margin in the first round. Watson went out of the tournament with £5,000, according to my information, while Hayes, sticking around long enough to win a consolation event for the losers, toddled off with £11,000. A further silliness of the event (though it is one common to all match-play prize-days) was that the two finalists, playing for £30,000 and £18,000 respectively – I had better explain that it's the winner who gets the greater sum – were free to play golf of a sometimes embarrassingly feeble standard. When the senior commentators, Peter Alliss and Henry Cotton, faced the cameras afterwards, it is difficult to say which they were more ensquirmed by, the general sense of anti-climax or the particularly wide range of ugly technical unorthodoxies perpetrated by the winner, Aoki of Japan. Aoki was a great encouragement to all the fantasists looking in, since he was not noticeably more elegant in his play than the average gravedigger in his work.

With the aid of *The World of Professional Golf: Mark H. McCormack's Golf Annual 1978* (Angus & Robertson, £3.95, limp) I have been looking into Japanese golf, to see whether there's any more encouragement where that came from. And indeed there is. Aoki is by no means at the top of the tree in Japan. He has been known to mingle, on occasion, with its very roots. In the 1977 All-Stars Tournament at the Shinyu Country Club, Hyogo, for example, Aoki was last in a field of 18, picking up the equivalent of 909 US dollars for two rounds of 74 and 79. Needless to say, the 'Stars' who beat him were unknown in our firmament: in fact, the tournament was won by Nakamura, who beat Murakami and Mori on the first hole of a sudden-death play-off. I am happy to say that 'sudden-death play-off' does not mean anything more sinister in Japan than it does here, because Murakami and Mori went on to play, four days later, in the Kokudo Keikaku Summers event, staged at the moderately tricky (to type) Shirasagi Country Club, Tochigi. Here Aoki hauled himself up to second place, flailing his way to 10,091 US dollars. Later in the month, he was back to 18th again in the KBC Augusta (held, naturally, not at Augusta, Japan, but the Fukuoka Country Club, Fukuoka). But it was worth 1,393 US dollars to him. He seems to have had something better to do during the Hiroshima Open (where the luckless Mori was last, in spite of rounds of 69, 71, 71 and 79) and 12th place in the Sampo Classic raked him in only a measly 1,091 dollars. But he was back up to fourth in the Japan PGA Championship at Gifu (4,364 dollars); and end September, as the Americans say, saw him scorch home in the Jun Classic, back in Tochigi, with a five-stroke lead and a prize of 18,182 dollars. From here on till the end of the year, he was pretty well into the money, winning the United States v Japan Tournament (six million yen) and coming third (four million) in the Japan Open behind Ballesteros and Murakami. If this is bafflingly unorthodox and untutored play, I think I'll start today.

I'm not claiming it's impossible to make a bad living on the golf circuits of the world. If you come last in the Carrolls Irish Open, for instance, they pay you less than what I'm getting for this article. All I say is that success, in golf, seems to breed success in an alarmingly silly, geometrically progressive way. Do jolly well once and they invite you to a jolly exclusive tourney somewhere else where you can do absurdly jolly better – even though your actual performance need not, in itself, improve. Only those invited to the jolly exclusive tourney, of course, get the chance to do the hole in one and win the enormous and ghastly house. A horrible aristocracy of good fortune. And particularly galling for those of us who just can't be bothered to get out there and show them how it ought to be done. I admire the daft pluck of those who do, though. McCormack's manual records that in the World Cup Tournament, at the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club, Manila, won by Gary Player in 289, the last-placed man was Mirko Vovk of Yugoslavia with 391 (97, 105, 97, 92). Vovk is described as an amateur. I would call him a fellow-sufferer.

Tom Disch

How to Behave When Dead

A notorious tease, he may pretend
not to be aware of you.
Just wait.
He must speak first. Then
you may begin to praise him.

Remember:
sincerity and naturalness
count for more than wit.
His jokes may strike you as
abstruse.
Only laugh if he does.

Gifts?
They say he's mad for art,
but whether in the melting
elegiac mode of, say, this
Vase of Poppies
or, turning the mirror
to his own face, a bronze skull
gorging on a snake –
that is a matter of taste.
In any case, the expense
is what he notices.

What to wear.
Some authorities
still insist on black.
But really, in this modern age,
your best is all that is required.

Television

Julian Barnes

Man Date

Blake has quite a lot to answer for when it comes to his present-day supporters. He gets cited as an excuse, variously, for faux-naïveté, gawky technique, self-indulgence, drug addiction, infantile religiosity, and an active and maiming denial of the intellect. Adrian Mitchell has been giving Blake a bad name for years with his strident paternity suit. The latest child of Albion is Kris Kristofferson, who towards the end of *A Lonely Way Back Home* (BBC-1) declared his own open-mouthed discipleship. 'He was a visionary and he was a poet of the imagination and he stuck by his guns' was the piercing summary from a man who, incredibly, once read English as a Rhodes scholar at Oxford; moments later, Kris was lounging on about 'this son of a gun'. Wild Bill Blake as hero of the Old West: why not add that to the list as well?

Quite what Blake himself would have made of this gentle American warbler, speeding down a concrete English motorway in a fleet of five limos, is, as they say, an open question. But there was a general feeling – encouraged by a blankly compliant feed-man called Steve Turner – that Wild Bill would somehow have approved. Still, perhaps it's wrong to hold too much against Kris himself, whose earlier alcoholism must have burnt out more brain cells than he's had hot joints; or against his influential wife Rita Coolidge, all glisteny lipstick and impassive features, who had the misfortune to be taken to church 18 times a week as a child. With this duo of pasts, perhaps the most one can expect of such a simple, boring, born-again singer is an anodyne evangelism and a born-again bank balance.

The passive imprecisions of a religious belief like Kristofferson's are presumably left unshaken by the unearned suffering on show in *World in Action*'s report on transsexuals This wasn't one of those anguishing Granada

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YURI MASUROK baritone
Craig Sheppard piano
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programmes which make you feel that the world has been surrendered to the Devil; just one which confirmed that, if God does exist, then boy, he certainly screwed up. 'I always felt as if I was someone else trapped inside the wrong body,' explained a Penny who had become a Benny; he was preparing to undergo what others might think of an Amazonian self-mutilation simply because 'It's not how I see myself'. Nor was it only the degree of dogged willingness to lop off hated flesh that impressed: how do you think you would handle a life in which you grew up thinking of yourself as a boy, were appalled by female puberty, got drunk one night in Germany to wake up deflowered and pregnant, mothered a child for 12 years, then took hormones and started fathering it? Not half as sensibly, I'll bet, as Benny seems to have done; but then, you might not have his tenacious and consoling certainty about his real identity. To an outsider, it was revealing to note how the two transsexual interviewees (endorsing Jan Morris in *Conundrum*) were very interested in gender and hardly at all in sex; and also how delicately and circuitously they talked about both sex and their operations to change it: at such moments, they picked up language with tongs.

Which reminds me that I owe an apology to Sir Alfred Ayer, whom I described last week as falling out of his chair while trying to read the autocue on *Word for Word* (BBC-2). It turns out that the Tumbling Professor, who is well qualified for spontaneous spouting, in fact declined the use of this fashionable self-help instrument which gives most people an air of glazed aggression, as if they are trying to outstare the neighbours' unfriendly Dobermann pinscher. He was, I can confirm, using that old system from the early days of TV, called Memory, according to which you first store up in your head everything you have to say, and then fall off your chair while racking your brain in attempts to recall it. This system, of course, has the additional disadvantage of making you look as if you are trying to run away from the neighbours' Dobermann pinscher, which has unaccountably turned up in the studio.

On Monday the Grousers' Slot on *Word for Word* was filled by Professor Randolph Quirk, who, apart from swatting the mike with a contemptuous ping at one point, as if putting down a cheeky student, behaved more or less normally. He even began with a stout defence of usage, and talked common sense about how rare the ambiguities paraded by linguistic magistrates really are. Still, the Slot manages to undermine the most level-headed performer, and before his three minutes were over Quirk was bitching away with the best of them about 'militate against' and the nob's pronoun. For all the Grousing, I've only caught one rank ambiguity on TV in recent days, and that was while button-punching. 'Mandate speaks my language' was a baffling phrase picked from the lips of Sacha Distel while he was hovering with revolting confidence over some After Eight girl. It turned out to be an ad for some male pong or other, and the brand name should presumably be hyphenated. But for a moment it sparked off patterns of fantasy: a body talc called Referendum? Vaginal deodorant called Single Transferable Vote? Armpit spray called Recount?

'Fir-y miles to the gig, aht inna middle of the carrot-crunchers – an' the wheels give aht.' Trevor Preston's taste for your actual real street (or Sree) usage, expansively deployed in *Aht*, got another hearing in *Premiere 2's* production of his *One of These Nights I'm Gonna Get an Early Day* (BBC-2). It laid out the mild but indicative disasters of a bickering, boozing jazz quintet, who set off for a gig up where the motorways lead to; they break down, get late, and never play their set, while around and against them knock reminders of aging and unfashionability. There is talk of the drummer who OD'd at 42, and of the modern kids who only like interminable rock (not that one didn't sympathise with them – the jazz this quintet were meant to be playing was of the untiring brand in which instruments roar up and down in turn for long stretches without any of them having the decency to reveal a tune). Nowadays, it seems, even the scrubbers go exclusively for punk, and fall about at the sight of a receding hairline. 'I've seen bigger tits on a birdbarf,' murmured the rebuffed Stu to himself. Preston's play was neat, grey and glumly humorous. When the band took a snack in a motorway cafe, the eggs were cold: from now on, you felt sure, they weren't going to get any hotter.

Weekend Competition

No 2537 Set by Arthur Ritus

In *My Kind of Movie* (BBC-2), Sue MacGregor interviews well-known people about their favourite films: Sir Robert Mark discusses *The Way Ahead*, Anna Raeburn *Citizen Kane*, Yehudi Menuhin *Brief Encounter*. How would the programme go if they got *really* famous people on it: Hitler talking about *Triumph of the Will*, Mussolini on *Bicycle Thieves*, Captain Webb on *Jaws*, Liszt on *Song Without End*. Up to 150 words; by 3 November.

Result of No 2534 Set by Ms de Meaner

We asked for examples of the plot-revealing acronyms which are formed by the titles of famous books.

Report by Dan Drough

Oh dear. Well, that's what we *thought* we'd asked you to do, but for some reason at least half of you went barking off on the wrong track, and started inventing silly book-titles whose initial letters spelt LIES or RUBBISH or KNICKERS. Well, there's nothing very clever about that, is there? You ought to know by now that when any slight ambiguity or difficulty invades the phrasing of a comp, the opposite of Occam's Law applies: prefer the more difficult version. Still, we visited some routine humiliation – like never being allowed to work in Fleet Street again – on Ms de Meaner for her part in the screw-up; and to those happy few who not only understood her intentions but managed to tweak a smile out of us, we offer very generous remuneration. A quid a quip. P.S. Hope you're all getting *thirsty* for winning next month.

Exasperating Miss Marries Advantageously
Socially Isolated Loomworker Abandons Soul-destroying Miserliness And Rediscovers Normal Emotional Relationships
Unfulfilled Liffey-people Yield Some Suppressed Erotic Secrets
Amorous Sextet Experience Various Eyebrow Raising Emotional Deadlocks Happy Ending A Delusion

JANE MORTON

Proposal Rejected – Indignant Darcy – Elizabeth Angry – Non-U – Discovers Pemberley – Reunion – Explanations – Justifications – Ultimately Darcy Inevitably Captures Elizabeth
Fond Adorer Under Satan's Thumb
Bossed – Earns Little – Overworked – Wedded – Self-Taught – Adult Initiative Rewarded – Success

JOYCE JOHNSON

Silly Capers Of Outrageous Pressman
Innumerable Crimes, Lust and Utter Depravity Including Umpteen Stabbings
Copulation, Orgasms, Unbridled Permissiveness, Lawrentian Exhilarating Sex

PAUL PASTOR

God Expels Naughty Eve, Sex Is Sinful
Laws, Exhortations, Vows, Instructions To Israelites Compelling Usual Sacrifices
Record Extraordinary Vision – Elders, Lamb, Angels, Throne – I, Omniscient, Never-ending

A. J. WYBORN

Ripped Ex Bronte, Extends Cinderella, Culminates Arson
Fishing, Impotence, Exhausted Society, Taurmomachy – Aach!
Lascivious Oldster Loves Inane Teenager Atrabiliously

IAN SAINSBURY

Temptress Has Rug. Eagerly Expresses Wild Eroticism. Excessive, Kittenish, Sinning.
Dominating Odious Man Bullies Everybody. Youngest, A Ninny, Dies. Sister Overlooked. Nemesis.
Visiting Adventuress Naughtily Intrigues Though Young. Fascinating Amoral Irrepressible Rebel.

HELEN MCGREGOR

What A Tripe-laden Effusion! Rabbits Scampering Happily In Pastoral Dreamland Overcome Wicked Nasties
Crowd Of Loony, Dumb Characters On Melodramatic Farm Offer Refuge To Flora. A Right Mickey-take.

JIM ANTHONY

Trapezing Ape-lover Righteously Zipping Around Naked
Begins In Beginning Lovely Ending

PAUL COLSTON

The Old Man's Joy Over Nephew's Enviable Success
Joking About With Sharks

ROBERT BAIRD

Little Ogress Loves Immodestly Tickling Adult

LISSLOTTE LESCHKE

Anna's Notorious Necking Angers Karenin. After Romantic Elopement Nemesis Inevitable. Non-stop Angst.

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

Deathless Ruritanian Aristocratic Clot-lover Under Lid Asleep

ROBERT COLSTON

Loss Of Virginity – Espousal – She's Taken, Oliver Remains. Yuk!

ROB BENNETT

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Tony Miles

Chess

No 105 The Lloyds Bank Masters'

The recent Lloyds Bank Masters' tournament, held at the Cumberland Hotel in London, proved yet again that a large Swiss-system tournament is by far the easiest way to mass produce titles. Of the 110 starters only 10 were titled, 5GMs and 5IMs, yet careful pairings produced no less than seven norms, and others missed chances in the last round.

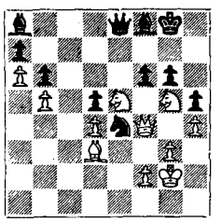
The event was dominated by the untitled American John Peters. After his fine showing at Lone Pine earlier this year he began as one of the favourites, and duly justified this with a start of 6½/7. Only a ninth round loss to the Finn Rantanen robbed him of ouright first place, and he was left to finish level with the Finn and Paul Littlewood on 7½/10. Despite this defeat he accomplished his main task of registering his second GM norm.

Littlewood, who was undefeated, scored an IM result as did Nigel Povah, the Dutch player Paul van der Sterren, and three other Americans John Watson, Larry D. Evans (as distinct from his more famous namesake) and Bruce Rind.

Paul Littlewood's crucial last round game:

White: L. Shamkovitch Black: P. Littlewood

1. P-K4, P-K4; 2. N-KB3, N-QB3; 3. B-N5, P-QR3; 4. B-R4, N-B3; 5. 0-0, B-K2; 6. R-K1, P-QN4; 7. B-N3, 0-0; 8. P-B3, P-Q3; 9. P-KR3, N-QR4; 10. B-B2, P-B4; 11. P-Q4, Q-B2; 12. QN-Q2, BP × P; 13. P × P, N-B3; 14. P-R3, P × P; 15. N-N3, R-K1; 16. QN × P, N × N; 17. N × N, B-N2; 18. B-B4, KB-B1; 19. P-B3, Q-N3; 20. K-R1, P-N3; 21. Q-Q2, B-N2; 22. QR-Q1, P-Q4; 23. P-K5; N-Q2; 24. B-K3, B × P; 25. N-B5, P-Q5; 26. N × QP, Q-B2; 27. B-N3, QR-Q1; 28. Q-B1, Q × Q; 29. R × Q, N-B4; 30. R × N, B × N; 31. R-B7, B-Q4; 32. B × B, R × B; 33. B-B2, R × Rch; 34. B × R, B × P; 35. R-B8ch, K-N2; 36. B-N4, R-Q8ch; 37. K-R2, R-QB8; 38. R-K8, P-N4; 39. B-B8ch, K-N3; 40. P-N4, R-B7ch; 41. K-N1, B-Q5ch; 42. K-R1, B-B4; 43. B × B, R × B; 44. R-QR8, R-B3; 45. K-N2, P-R3; 46. K-N3, K-B3; 47. P-KR4, K-K4; 48. P-R5, K-Q5; 49. R-R7, R-B3; 50. R-B7, P-R4; 51. R-R7, P-N5; 52. P × P, P × P; 53. K-B2, P-N6; 54. K-K2, R-QN3; 55. R-Q7ch, K-K4 Resigns.



Problem 105

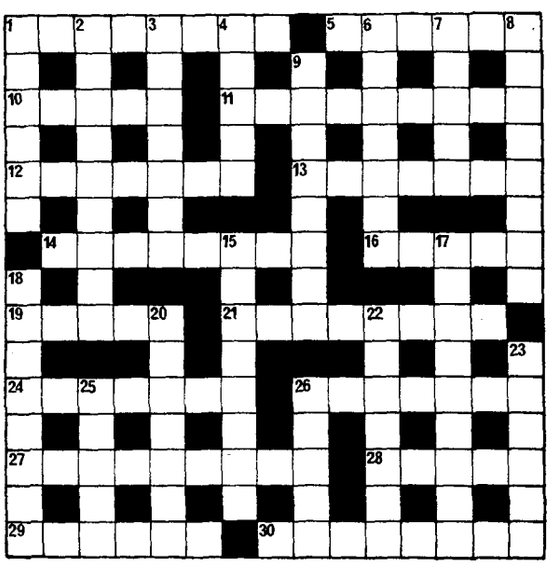
White to play. How should the game go? Answers to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked not later than 1 November.

Solution to Problem 103

Yes, with 1. K-N1!! The game then continued 1. . . P-B5; 2. PR4! R-B8ch; 3. K-R2, K-B4; 4. R-K4, P × P; 5. R × P, K × P; 6. P-R4ch and 7. R × P and White won (since 6 . . . K-R4; 7. R × P, R-R8; 8. R-QB4, R × P; 9. R × Rch wins by a tempo). Other possibilities are a) 1. K-N1, R-B8ch; 2. K-R2, R-B7; 3. R-QR4, P-B5; 4. R × P, P-B6; 5. K-N3!! P × P; 6. K-R2 winning. b) 1. K-N1, K-K4; 2. K-R2, P-B5; 3. P-QR4! R-B7; 4. P-R5, P-B6; 5. P-N6! and White queens with check. The best defensive try is probably 1 . . . R-B7; 2. R-QR4, R-B4 and if 3. R-R5, P-R3; 4. P-R4, R-B8ch and P × P.

Weekend Crossword 1280

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1280, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 31 October.



ACROSS

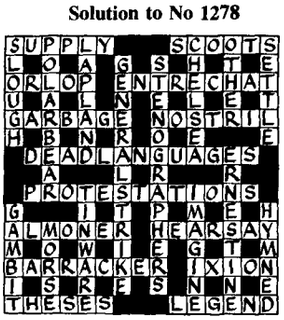
1. Practise culture among the lowly in prison (8).
5. The chatterbox needs something to stop him talking about a graduate after a second (6).
10. Religious leaders give one a degree by writing (5).
11. They boast when culture is put on by a television personality (9).
12. Items on the menu which spend a long time in the cooking vessels (7).
13. Most of crowd join with woman in prayer (7).
14. Finding fault although at first giving a little credit to it (8).
16. Fruit which becomes very soft in a drink (5).
19. Emblem showing a tailless animal (5).
21. Herb has a loved one in the grass (8).
24. Stupid persons or fellows without a clue (7).
26. The party has little time for an actor (7).
27. Am dropped from England team for being mixed up (9).
28. Conspirator addressed as an animal (5).
29. Kings buried in Stroud (6).
30. Once more take a back seat (8).

DOWN

1. Low characters born with disabilities (6).
2. Treat organised in garden building is spoilt (9).
3. Understanding a thing is different (7).
4. Liberal honours which show on the face (5).
6. A month with a woman (7).
7. There is nothing in store for a nobleman (5).
8. Something fine for one who moves round return of service (8).
9. Knight gives composer a part back (8).
15. Garment for one swallowed by river fish (8).
17. A page with room for an unoriginal remark (9).
18. I am in a depression after an order to be dutiful (8).
20. Woman who is the one Lear ill-treated (7).
22. Coo, Bert, we're in time (7).
23. Firmly fix me in the money (6).
25. Famous but not up to Heath's standard (5).
26. Trick to avoid (5).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1278



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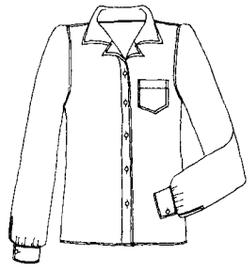

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NEW STATESMAN

Vol. 96 No. 2483

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CENTRAL LONDON FABIAN SOCIETY. Trevor Unwin of CAMRA on 'Politics and Beer', Wed. 25 Oct. 7.30 p.m. 5 Tavistock Place, WC1. All welcome.

SHAW SOCIETY. Friday, 27 October. Michael Holroyd on 'Shaw and Women'. Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1. Coffee 6.30 p.m. Meeting 7.0 p.m.

PROFESSOR HANS EYSENCK. 'Why can't a woman be like a man?' Mensa Open Meeting. Thursday, 26 October, 8 p.m. 50p, at National Liberal Club, 1 Whitehall Place, SW1. Visitors welcome.

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